

Future Punishment.

A Synopsis of Sermons on the FINAL STATE OF THE UNGODLY,

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TEXTS:—1 Pet. IV: 17; 2 Thess. I: 8, 9.

'What shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God?' 1 Pet., IV: 17.

—R. V.

PETER'S AWFUL QUESTION.

'What shall be the *telos*, end, ultimate destiny, issue or result?'

Telos denotes the limit at which a thing ceases to be; but always, the end of some act or state, and not in reference to the end of a period of time, never a termination in and for itself, nor as an end in space. Primarily, *telos* means the goal reached, the completion or conclusion at which a thing arrives either as an issue or ending, i.e., final result or consummation. Here, *telos* signifies that by which a thing is finished, having reference to a course now completed, i.e., the final lot or fate as if a recompense, specially referring to the persons, definitely, whom the destiny befalls; in this case, the issue of the final judgment for the disobedient and unrighteous.

The destiny befalls "them that obey not," the *apeithounton*, i.e., those who will not allow themselves to be persuaded, but turn away from God's revealed will and reject the offers of his grace; *lit.* 'refuse belief and obedience,' or compliance with the gospel of God, and hence, are wilfully disobedient. The great question is, what shall finally become of such persons. Unsaved man, what!

Meyer translates the first clause of this verse, 'For it is the time of the beginning of the judgment, i.e., in which the judgment is beginning,' and says the sense is: "If God does not exempt us, the members of His house (His family), from judgment, but permits it to take its beginning at us, how should the unbeliev-

ers be exempted?" See John III: 18.

God certainly tries and tests the character of his own people, i.e., 'the house of God,' 'us,' elsewhere spoken of as 'the spiritual house,' 'the church of the living God,' 'whose house are we,' etc. This trial or testing, i.e., judgment, must begin at the house of God. 'Judgment,' i.e., condemnation of wrong, the decision which one passes on the faults of others, and denotes a judgment unfavorable to those concerned, a judgment involving punishment; here, it means the execution of judgment as displayed in the infliction of punishment, the final judgment in its gradual development. To the righteous, these judgments or punishments are for purposes of chastening and purifying—(Heb. XII: 6) Judgment though beginning 'at the house of God' does not end there, but passes on to the 'ungodly and sinner.' Christians suffer only the beginning of the judgment, not its close; it may be delayed to the unbelievers, but it will come and be completed by the sentence of condemnation, at the last great day. 'The ungodly and sinner' may prosper in this world and die honored by men, but what shall the end be? 'If the righteous is scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?' Oh where! The question is one that demands an emphatic negative answer, i.e., he will not be able to appear, at all, in the judgment before God. If God deals thus in judgment with his own people, 'what shall be the final lot or fate of them that obey not the gospel of God?' What awful questions! Who can answer them?

PAUL'S TERRIBLE ANSWER.

Peter asks the questions. Paul attempts an answer in 2 Thess I: 8, 9. 'Rendering vengeance to them that know

not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus; who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might.' R. V.

Paul answers, but his answer leaves us in the dark, it is only this simple statement of a fact. He simply says, that they 'that know not God' and 'that obey not the gospel,' 'shall suffer punishment,' and that the punishment is 'eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might.' But what is that?

They 'shall suffer punishment,' i.e., pay the penalty, judicially satisfy the right by undergoing justice, atone for or make reparation by satisfactory compensation. This punishment is the penalty to right, a compensation to justice, and the apostle declares it to be 'eternal destruction;' not destruction however in the sense of absolute annihilation or final restoration, but destruction in the sense of ruin or loss. Here destruction clearly means the

LOSS OF A LIFE OF BLESSEDNESS

after death, i.e., it means future misery.—The word in itself means separation, i.e., a dissolution of component parts, a separation from that which is needful to the normal condition of a thing or the perfection of its existence, which is clearly brought out in the text by 'destruction from.'—The meaning is that the punishment suffered, is eternal separation from the face of the Lord, and from the glory which is a creation of His power. Eternal banishment from God and glory—But what is that? Oh, sinner, what is eternal banishment from God! Oh, ungodly! what is eternal separation from the glory of God? What words of thought can reach it? What tongue can speak it? All the Apostles could do, was to ask the question and state the fact—Even Christ could not draw the curtain and reveal the reality, He only could use resemblances by which we may glance at it—Oh that men realized the terrible reality of these eternal things.

THE END SHALL BE ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

The clear teaching of scripture is an intermediate state, for both the believer and the unbeliever, between death and the resurrection, as distinct from the final state of heaven and hell, that follows after the general judgment. Paul said, Acts XXIV : 15, 'there shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust.' And Christ said, Jno. V : 28 29, 'Marvel not at this, for the hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done (practised) evil unto the resurrection of judgment (condemnation or damnation).'

PUNISHMENT AFTER JUDGMENT.

From this it is very clear that the general judgment not only follows the resurrection, but that the fulness of reward, or of punishment does not come until after the sentence of that judgment is passed. The Apostle says in 2nd Cor. V : 10, 'For we must all be made manifest (appear) before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' The sinner is in punishment in the intermediate state as shown in Luke XVI : 23-28, but the finality as to degree of punishment, could not come until the consummation of all things at the end of the Gospel dispensation—Not until the effect of the sinner's sins were manifested, not only in himself, but in every individual of the race that could be effected by them, could he be judged and punished.—Not until the result of his life was fully realized in its relation to the kingdom of God, was the sinner perfectly ripe for the final harvest—Not until then could there be a final judgment as to the full measure of his punishment 'One sinner destroyeth much good,' Ecc IX : 18. 'And that man perished not alone in his iniquity.' Josh. XXII : 20.

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INHERENT AND SELF EVIDENT.

The principle of rewards for voluntary goodness, and of punishment for voluntary badness, is self-evident to the human mind, and inherent in human conscience. This principle is in harmony with the rightness of things, and the laws of nature, as well as, of grace. In material nature, whoever transgresses its laws, is punished by nature, with suffering. As we have shown, the punishments of the wicked, like the rewards of the righteous, are necessarily in the future state. This fact of future punishment is also in harmony with the laws of our physical life; the old man frequently suffers the penalty of youthful transgressions, and the violation, in boyhood, of the laws of his physical constitution. This was Job's experience, as expressed in chap. XIII; 26. 'For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to inherit the iniquities of my youth.'

If there be a personal God who exercises moral government over man, if man's sin (violation of moral law) deserves punishment, and if man's life continues after death, then, there must be a future state of retribution or punishment. This principle of moral retribution is analogous to the principle of material retribution.

RETRIBUTION IN NATURAL RELIGION.

Natural, as well as revealed religion, creates the expectation and belief in a retribution of some kind, in the next life, for wrong doing. Every religion has, not only, its future state of eternal blessedness, but also of eternal misery. Whence came these convictions, but from a common conscience and from the original fountain of teaching to the ancestral family of the race. Scripture revelation did not originate these doctrines or beliefs, it has simply thrown light upon them. 2 Tim. — I: 10. As in the case of the existence of God, the Scriptures assume the fact of immortality, and tell us whence that immortality came. In view of the teachings of conditional immortality and

annihilation, it may be well to emphasise the idea of man's

NATURAL OR INHERENT IMMORTALITY.

Man as man, in his creation as well as redemption, stands out as distinct, and above all other 'living creature.' Of the latter, God said: — 'Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind.' Gen. I: 24; but of the former God said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' V: 26, *Literally*, 'Let us cause to be made the red soil, earthy, or material one, into our species or essential nature, according to our manifestation.' From this, we see that God's purpose was to take pre-existing matter, perhaps organized animal life, and cause it to take unto itself His own nature (image) and reproduce His own moral character (likeness), that He might have, not only a representative of His authority, but a manifestation of His moral nature and character, in this material world: Man, 'formed of the dust of the ground,' 'became a living soul,' not by the distinct creative fiat, 'Let there be,' as in all else of creation, but by a generative act, 'and the Lord God * * * breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (or lives.)' In this is clearly set forth the idea that the human physical, is connected with and brought out of previous nature or natures, and that the human body was not a creation *de-nihilo*. 'And man became a living soul,' not that the matter or living organism of the body, was transubstantiated into something essentially different from itself, but that it took into itself elements not previously in the animal nature. All animals have souls, but man by the inbreathing or generative act of God, literally

'BECAME UNTO A LIVING SOUL-NATURE.'

Gen. VII; 22, and 1 Cor. XV: 45, R. V.

The animal has a soul, but the man is a soul that has a body. Notice, man became not merely a soul, but a *living soul*, literally. 'And the man became as to soul, the animal of life,

i.e., endued with life.' From this, it is clear that man became the soul of life, the life itself, i.e., that man, in distinction from an ordinary animal, became as to the soul (the vital force which animates the body and shows itself in breathing; the seat of the feelings, desires, affections, and aversions) possessed of

AN INHERENT LIFE PRINCIPLE,

essence of vitality or spirit of immortality. This is apparent, when the source of this life and the generative act is observed. 'And the Lord God breathed (blowed) into his nostrils (breathing places, the members with which he breathes) the breath (spirit, spoken of the breath of God, i.e., the spirit of God imparting life) of life (lives, emphatic form as distinguishing the living being from the life itself.) Evidently, there was something that went forth from God and entered into man; and that something is God's 'breath of life', i.e., the spirit of God in its active self-motion becomes the principle of life in man, and is spirit in its actual personality. Man had thus imparted to him something that is common, both to God and man, i.e., a divine principle of life, and in consequence man became a living, vitalizing, self-conscious, self-revealing soul. Man, like God, thus became a distinct personality, and able to say, 'I am' and 'I will.' He is God-born, of the God-species, as to essence of nature. He is God's other-self in manifestation, i.e., he is

THE NATURAL CHILD OF GOD.

'God is our Father' by nature as well as by grace. Man naturally, not conditionally, is a limited and shadowed divinity as to spiritual nature. 'For thou hast made him but little lower than God.' Ps. VIII; 5, R. V. Man, as to his material nature, was God-made, but as to his immaterial, was God-born. His coming into existence was a distinct creative act; it was the creation of a new species that up till the time of the inspiration of spirit from spirit, into organized animal life,

did not exist. Clearly then, man consists of the material body related to earth, animal soul related to universal life, and divine spirit related to the eternal God. The body and soul are not naturally in themselves immortal. God provided conditional immortality for the body, through 'the tree of life' in Eden; Gen. II; 9; III; 22; and for the soul unconditional immortality through the inbreathed spirit. Job XXXIII; 4. 'The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life.' The spirit is the vital principle that directly quickens the soul with its own immortal existence, and indirectly animates the body, through the soul, with vitality. The spirit is

THE RATIONAL PART OF MAN,

the power by which he feels, thinks, wills, decides, and upon which the spirit of God exerts its influence. The soul may have shape, features &c., corresponding to its body, but the spirit is simple essence, possessed of the power of knowing, desiring, deciding and acting. From this, we see that natural death can only apply to the body; the Apostle says in 2 Cor. V; 1, death is dissolution of 'the earthly house of our tabernacle, or bodily frame.' After death the spiritual nature of man is no longer spoken of in Scripture as soul in contrast to body, but as spirit in contrast with Angels. Heb XII; 22, 23; Acts XXIII; 8. As shown, the spiritual nature, possessing a natural and inherent immortality, cannot, at death pass into a state of unconsciousness, or into that of soul sleeping, but as Christ represents, is immediately in a state of pleasure or pain. See Luke XVI; 22-24; XXIII; 43. From these, we see that conscious immortal existence, applies to both the wicked and the righteous, and annihilation to neither, as an immortal spirit cannot be placed in a conditional state of existence, or destroyed absolutely. Scripture acknowledges, as the true immortality, a continuous individual spiritual existence,

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possessing consciousness and imperishability. Isa. LXVI : 24, Rev. XIV : 11, etc. **CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY OR ANNIHILATION**

can no more apply to man, than to the devil and his angels, the conscious, active existence of whom, we all for very good reasons admit. Unsav'd man ! let me say to you most emphatically, that death cannot put you into an eternal sleep, nor destroy your conscious existence, because your spiritual nature is akin to God's. See Matt. XXII : 32. Luke XV : 11. Acts XVII : 28 29. Romans VIII : 16, etc. To return to the proposition that revelation

DID NOT ORIGINATE THESE DOCTRINES

or beliefs, neither did it create the terms, used to express the ideas as to the future state. The God inspired scripture found, in the heathen religion, the Greek *pneuma* corresponding to the Hebrew *ruakh*, in both languages meaning spirit, *psuche* to *nephesh*, each meaning soul, *sheol* to *hades* and *gehenna* to *tartaros*. The Hebrew *sheol* meant the under world, the unseen state, the dwelling place of the dead, and the Greek *hades* the invisible land, the realm of the dead. Hence they were interchangeable terms, and to each conveyed the idea of the common receptacle of disembodied spirits, i.e., the place of assembly and residence for all who depart from the present world ; therefore the world beyond to all the dead and all that death brings with it. It is in particular the place for sinners, where they find the result of their living in this life. Christ used these very same terms, but dispelled the mists and darkness that hung over them, through which the human mind could not penetrate ; and gave us a truer conception of the condition represented by these words. From His teaching, we learn that not only all the dead, both righteous and wicked, are received into this one great region ; but that the separation which begins here

between them, becomes there, absolute and final. He divides *hades* into two departments : Paradise, the place or state of the righteous dead ; and what might be called Hades proper, the abode or state of the wicked dead. Luke XVI : 23 26.

Hades is represented, in the scriptures, as

AN INTERMEDIATE STATE OR CONDITION

between death and the resurrection, i.e., the place or state in which all the dead await the consummation of all things, which is finally brought about by the accomplishment of redemption for the race. The place itself is not so much described, as the state or character and employments of its occupants, being blessedness to the righteous and misery to the wicked. Paradise is made to apply to, and will be merged in the final heaven ; Rev. II : 7 ; XXII : 2 ; and the other part of *hades* to the final hell ; Rev. XX : 14. *Tartaros*, a dark abyss, said to be as deep below *hades* as earth is below heaven. The name of a subterranean region, doleful and dark, regarded by the ancient Greeks and Romans, as the abode of the wicked dead, the regions of the damned where they suffer punishment for their evil deeds. As already remarked it corresponds to the *gehenna* of the Hebrews, and of the Jews in the time of Christ.

The word *gehenna* is the Greek representative of the Hebrew *Ge Hinnom* denoting 'the valley of Hinnom' (Josh XV : 8,) or more fully 'the valley of the children of Hinnom,' (Josh XXIII : 16.) Hinnom was probably an early owner. It was a deep, dark, narrow, gloomy glen or gorge S. W. of Jerusalem, once the place where the idolatrous Israelites 'burnt their children in the fire' (Jer. VII : 31,) unto Moloch, a Canaanitish divinity, who was represented by a hollow brass image, with the face of a bull, in which a fire was kept constantly burning. The victim was first sacrificed to the god and then thrown into its fiery arms. The place of sacrifice was called Tophet from

the beating of the *toph* (drum) to drown the cries of the victims, (Jer. XIX; 6,) or from *tuph* to spit, a place to be spit upon or abhorred, hence called 'the valley of slaughter'. (Jer. VII; 32.) After the abolishment of this form of idolatry by Josiah (2 Kgs. XXIII; 10,) the Jews so abhorred 'Hinnom's vale of slaughter,' that the horrible place was made, the receptacle of all putrefying matter, all manner of refuse, the dead bodies of animals and of unburied criminals, and of everything that could defile the holy city. Fires were kept constantly burning to consume all this filth, and thus prevent the air from becoming tainted by the putrefaction and render the city uninhabitable, hence it came to be called 'the gehenna (hell) of fire.' (Matt. V; 22,) because the fires were always burning. Thus, it also came to be used, as the natural symbol of penalty, and applied to the punishment following a life of sin. It was the popular expression for the 'hell' 'prepared for the devil and his angels,' and was so

USED BY CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES, not as merely accommodating themselves to a popular expression, but as believing in an actual state of misery for the lost. They used the term to designate the place of the damned and as a symbol of devouring judgment fire. The name gehenna was transferred to that part of Hades in which the wicked suffer punishment after death; but 'gehenna' is used in distinction from 'hades' when either the torments of hell itself, or the idea of a hellish torment, is to be expressed. Gehenna is clearly represented by Christ as the image of the place of everlasting punishment, doubtless on account of its ever-burning fires. Read Matt. V: 22, 29, 30; X: 28; XVIII: 9; XXIII: 15, 33; Mk. IX: 43, 45, 47; Luke XII: 5; Jas. III: 6. From these and many other passages, it will be seen that they who say we can know nothing

of the future state (neither of heaven nor hell) 'do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God,' (Matt. XXII: 29.) The Christian, in common with all religions, teaches the existence of these states of future happiness and misery, but unlike other religions, gives us a knowledge of the character of these states.

REVELATION DOES NOT EFFECT THE FACT OF FUTURE LIFE,

only our knowledge of it, and our opportunity to make the worst or best of it. Christianity as a religion discovers and proclaims salvation to the world, not damnation. The knowledge of the Gospel does not send more to hell and fewer to heaven, but the reverse. The Gospel does not propose to damn any body. It is a life-boat launched upon the tempestuous sea of life to rescue the shipwrecked. Neither the life-boat nor those who man it create the storm, likewise, neither the Gospel nor those who proclaim it, create the hell which the wicked make for themselves, but offer to help people to keep from it. It is a lamp in the hands of Jesus and His followers giving light and encouragement on the way to Heaven, and making more sure and substantial Elysium, the heaven of Mythology; at the same time, it is a signal to warn the wicked, discourage all it can from the ways of sin, and prevent as many as possible from going to hell. Without a Christian revelation,

FUTURE LIFE WOULD EXIST ALL THE SAME, but we could have no knowledge or assurance of it, at best it would offer to us a dim hope or a dark terror. Neither did Christian revelation create the fact or idea of eternal punishment in the future state, for, to the Greek and Roman the punishment of the impious in Tartarus was eternal, being represented by such mythologies as the vulture preying without ceasing on the liver of Tityus, by Ixion fixed on a perpetually revolving wheel, by Tantalus punished by insatiable thirst, standing in a pool of water

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up to the chin which flowed away whenever he attempted to drink it, by Sisyphus rolling a stone to the top of a hill, which no sooner reached the summit than it rolled back to the bottom, and by the Danaides who were sentenced to fill a perforated tub with water.

THE PUNISHMENT MUST BE TERRIBLE BEYOND DESCRIPTION.

This to be inferred, not from the descriptions of Dante's Inferno or Milton's Paradise lost but from the clear statements of scripture. These, most terrible statements concerning the punishment of the lost, are from the loving lips of Him who came from heaven, to save us from the possibility and consequences of that punishment. (See Phil. II : 6, 7, 8, R. V. and parallel passages.) His language was not mere figures of rhetoric, but the honest announcement of awful facts. The language may be figurative, it is true, but a figure always implies a reality which in this case is more terrible than the figure, just as the fire, carnage and slaughter, are indescribably more terrible than any pictures that may be drawn by language or painted on canvass. His imagery of the punishment of the wicked is couched in the strongest possible terms. We may speculate as to bodily punishment and material fire, yet it must be borne in mind that the punishments of hell follow the resurrection and judgment, and must be such punishments as will apply not only to the spirit nature but to the incorruptible, immortal body. (See I Cor. XV : 52-54) for the resurrected sinner will have a spiritual body (I Cor. XV : 44), though, not like the saints, a glorified body (Phil. III : 21.) The punishment of the intermediate state is natural, and applies only to the spirit, but the punishment of hell is penal, i.e. the endurance of a sentence affixed after duetrial and judgment, and must apply to the whole man—body, soul and spirit. It also must be observed that nearly all the descriptions in the New Testament, of the

punishments of the lost, refer to the "final state," with perhaps the single exception of Luke XVI : 19-31. Christ in his descriptions of hell and its punishments, does not show the real state, but only uses resemblances. One fact is however very apparent that

CHRIST BELIEVED IN A REAL HELL

which is manifest not only from His own teaching but also in His recognition of the teaching of John the Baptist, on the same subject. It must be borne in mind that the Bible is not the source of our religion ; man's duties to himself, his fellows and his God, form the basis for a religion, and these exist without any written revelation. As already shown, the Holy Scriptures do but reveal or shed light on the great facts of immortality and the future state. They are the light-house, but not the ocean nor the ship, and exist for the tempest tossed mariner. As the grammar systematizes, not creates language, so the Bible formulates the great principles of moral relations ; as the former becomes an authority for the proper use of words in the construction of a sentence, so the latter is the final arbiter in ascertaining the nature and acts of God in relation to man, and the duties and responsibilities of man in relation to God.

Turn the full light of God's word upon the fact of future punishment, and what saith it? Confining ourselves mainly to the N. T. Scriptures, let us examine

THE TEACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

In Matt. III; 7, he speaks of future punishment as 'the wrath to come,' which refers not to God's wrath in general, in which He stands opposed to man's disobedience, and to his obduracy in resisting the Gospel, and in which He manifests His wrath by punishing the sin; but to God's bearing towards the ungodly at the end of the dispensation of grace, which, at the last or judgment day, will be exhibited in penalties. It is the divine

judgment upon sin in its final consummation. 'The wrath to come' is 'the wrath of God,' the active outgoing of the involuntarily roused feelings of God against the wicked, the effect of which is the very reverse of salvation, and finally excludes from redemption. The impulses or emotions of wrath are the very opposite of those of love. "No vengeance is so terrible as the vengeance of insulted, rejected, ill-requited, out-raged love. 'The wrath to come' is not merely the wrath of justice, but the awful wrath of abused grace and mercy, the wrath of divine love transformed to divine vengeance; it is not excited or uncontrolled passion, but like the working of intelligent love, is the exercise of a mature resolution of the will.

"The wrath to come" is "the great day of his wrath" (Rev. VI : 17) the day on which the wrath of God will be made manifest in the punishment of the wicked, the last day in the present dispensation, the day in which Christ will return from heaven, raise the dead, hold the final judgment and perfect His Kingdom, the day in which God will execute terrible judgment upon His adversaries. God's wrath belongs to the end of the dispensation of grace and is the infliction of a penalty, and is attributed to Christ as Messianic judge.

'His wrath' is 'the wrath of the lamb'. (Rev VI; 16,) Divine wrath is an awful manifestation of divine love and divine righteousness from which a present change of heart manifested by 'fruit worthy of repentance,' is the only way of fleeing. See 1 Thess. I; 10, V; 9, and Rom. V; 9. There is no possible theory of Future Probation or Final Restoration in the Scriptures here quoted, neither in Matt. III; 7, nor in Rev. VI; 12-17, but a conscious and final separation from God and exclusion from the Messiah's kingdom, 'the kingdom of heaven.' In vs. 10 and 12 'the wrath to come' is set forth

by the ascetic prophet, who heralded the coming of Christ, under the image of 'the axe laid unto the root of the trees,' the 'fan in his hand' winnowing 'the chaff' from 'the wheat,' and the 'unquenchable fire' burning 'the chaff' and 'every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit.'

In the East, trees are valued not for ornamental purposes, but for utility, and fruit trees only as they are productive of 'good fruit.' The barren tree or the one producing evil fruit, is considered a cumber of the ground, and the husbandman literally lays his axe, not among the leaves or branches to prune, but at the root for individual, organic destruction. The evidence of salvation was not by natural descent from Abraham, but by actually bringing forth the good fruit of righteousness of life, i. e., 'the fruit of the Spirit.' 'Every (individual) tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit (i. e. each worthless tree) is (not, will be) hewn down (by the axe of death) and cast into the fire, (of perdition).' This certainly shows exclusion from 'the kingdom of heaven' of which John was speaking, and consignment to a place of suffering. Reading it literally, 'is being hewn down, and being cast into the fire,' implies the infliction of punishment immediately after death and not after judgment. It is now, in course of inevitable accomplishment, in harmony with the natural laws of God's dealings with the useless in all His kingdoms. Brother, examine yourself in view of the coming wrath and know are you bringing forth 'fruit worthy of repentance.'

The eastern farmer had a circular, elevated, hard or paved space on his farm, where the grain was trodden out of the straw by oxen or horses. After taking away the straw he took the winnowing fan, a large wooden fork or shovel, and threw the mingled wheat and chaff up against the wind, which blew away the chaff and the grain fell to the floor. He continued this until he 'thoroughly

cleansed his threshing-floor.' To prevent the chaff, broken straw and other refuse from flying back into the grain, a fire was kept constantly burning on the windward side during the winnowing, in the flame of which these were consumed. The figure is doubtless, that of the separation of the righteous from the unrighteous, by the Holy Ghost just spoken of by John, as preparatory to everlasting rewards and punishments.

Notice, the fan (the Gospel of Christ), the hand (the Holy Spirit,) the floor (the Jewish Church, the Christian dispensation,) and the wheat (the righteous) are emphatically spoken of as the winnowers (Christ); but the chaff (the wicked, the worthless, the unfit for heaven) as not His. The separation here indicated is not the same as of v 10, that immediately follows upon death, but this separation follows after the harvest, at the final judgment. The grain and chaff had grown together, they were mingled in the threshing, but were separated by the winnowing. The growing, threshing, and winnowing were all done to "gather the (clean, pure, good) wheat into His garner, (heavenly inheritance)," Luke III: 17. "But the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire." The chaff is separated from the wheat for the good of the wheat and not for its own sake, it is of no use but for burning, and the wheat cannot reach its full value and use, until the chaff be separated from it; in like manner, this life is a mixture, but the full value of righteousness will be realized in the next, when the chaff of unrighteousness is perfectly winnowed out. One of the chief elements of heavenly life, is that all evil is excluded. As the granary represents the final heaven, so doubtless the "unquenchable fire" represents the final hell or *gehenna*. Those who do not love the Saviour, who reject Him, and do not delight or wish to be in his service, are chaff and have the privilege of separation from Him and his people forever.

The figure of burning the chaff with unquenchable fire is against all theories of restoration and annihilation. If the sinner will at any distant age be delivered from hell or at judgment cease to exist, then the word, 'unquenchable' is meaningless. At the grain winnowing, the fire never ceased until it had consumed the chaff, and was therefore to the chaff, in this sense, unquenchable. The word *asbestos* here translated, "unquenchable" means inextinguishable, i. e., fire perpetual in and of itself and not to be extinguished when that cast into it is consumed. In the figure before us "the unquenchable fire" is the wrath of God against sin, and in its very nature is eternal and must continue to burn so long as evil exists; "the chaff" is the incorruptible, spiritual body, and immortal spirit of the resurrected, individual sinner, and can never be consumed. Plainly then "the wrath to come" is not only separation of the worthless from the useful, but the conscious suffering of the indestructible personality in an inextinguishable flame of torment. Such was John's conception of hell. Not that it is a place forever flaming but as Whedon says; "hell is the penal condition of the condemned, sinner, and the fire the penal essence itself; hell has no existence save as a penalty for guilt."

My dear friend let one who loves your soul earnestly ask: are you wheat or chaff? When the wind of "the great day of His wrath has come" will you "be able to stand?" In that great day, to you, "what will be the end or final result?"

CHRIST'S PERSONAL TEACHINGS.

No higher author can be quoted touching the final state of the wicked than Christ; in fact he is the only one that ever "taught them as having authority." We will therefore enquire, first, what saith Jesus to the question, "What shall the end be," rather than, "what saith the scriptures?" Taking His teach-

ing in its chronological order, we begin with the

SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Matt. V : 22.—"The hell of fire." In verses 17 to 20 inclusive, Christ lays down the general principles of government in His Kingdom, in their relation to the older law of God, as practised under Judaism, with the purpose of showing that the kingdom of heaven is a fulfilment of the law of Moses. This, he illustrates by examples from the decalogue, given in vs. 21-37 ; the first example being the law against murder, vs. 21-26, upon which He places a deeper, higher and more spiritual significance. Murder, He said, is of the heart, it is not the outward act, but the passion or desire that prompts it. Having defined, "Thou shalt not kill," in a spiritual and moral sense, as unholy anger, He next proceeds to affix the penalty for murders committed by the heart. "The intense spirituality of all Christ's teaching makes a man what his heart is," says Dr. Jos. Parker. "It is no use for the hand to be able to uplift itself and show that it is without one drop of blood upon it—the question is, How many murders has the heart committed?" "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." I John III : 15.

In affixing the penalty for murder in Christ's kingdom, notice the transition, in vs. 21 and 22, from the Mosaic law, enforced by temporal punishments, inflicted by "the judgment" (local courts) and "the Council" (supreme court), to the spiritual law, enforced by the judgments of God. The terms "judgment," "Council" and "hell-fire" are used figuratively to indicate

DEGREES OF PUNISHMENT

in the future world, according to shades of difference in guilt. Jesus, in the examples given, does not refer to murder itself or any acts of violence, but to unrighteous anger and varying outbursts of passion in speech, illustrating different degrees of

criminality, according to the malignity of the disposition from which they proceed. Observe, says Lyman Abbott ; "That the comparison of judgment, Council, and hell fire indicates that future punishment is adjusted according to the sin of the condemned ; also, these two verses illustrate the meaning of the general principle laid down in verse 17." Lightfoot says ; "That adjustment of punishment is graded exactly according to the sin, i. e., to unjust anger the just anger and judgment of God, to public reproach a public trial, and hell-fire to that censure that adjudgeth another thither." Alford says, the sense is, "there were among the Jews three well known degrees of guilt, coming respectively under the cognizance of the local and supreme Courts, ('judgment and council'). And after these is set the Gehenna of fire, the end of the malefactor, whose corpse, thrown out in the valley of Hinnom, was devoured by the worm or the flame. Similarly, in the spiritual kingdom of Christ, shall the sins even of thought and word be brought into judgment and punished, each according to its degree of guilt, but even the least of them before no less a tribunal than the judgment seat of Christ. The most important thing to keep in mind is, that there is no distinction of kind between these punishments, only of degree. In the thing compared, the 'judgment' inflicted death by the sword, the 'council,' death by stoning, and the disgrace of the 'Gehenna of fire' followed as an intensification of the horrors of death ; but the punishment is one and the same—*death*. So also is the subject of the similitude, all the punishments are spiritual ; all result in eternal death ; but with various degrees (the nature of which is as yet hidden from us) as the degrees of guilt have been." Schaff says, "It is clear from the passage that there are different degrees of guilt, and that even the germ of sin in the heart condemns before God. The sin is not in the

word or act as such, but in the motive and spirit." In our conception of future punishment, we must not make the mistake of thinking of all the wicked, without distinction, being indifferently cast into hell and enduring the same penalty. The principle of degrees of punishment is recognized not only here, but also in Luke XII: 47, 48, Matt. XI: 21-24.

As the rewards and enjoyments of the righteous in glory, are represented as "one star differeth from another star" so, we may assume, will the penalties and sufferings of the wicked differ, probably no two being the same. It follows, therefore, as Whedon says, that "Our Lord here does threaten a penalty for sin in a future world. That penalty is strictly judicial, and not a mere natural consequence of sin. It is a positive infliction by the hand of divine justice. The degree of intensity (not the duration) of that punishment is adjusted to the grade of the sin."

THE PUNISHMENT IS ETERNAL DEATH

as a penalty, without distinction between venial or mortal sins, except, as to degrees in the severity of the punishment. From all this, it is evident, that "be not angry" and "do no murder," are not contrary to, or different from each other, but that the latter is a development from and completion of the former; the guilt not being in the act but in the feelings which prompt the act, the degree of guilt (sin), being enhanced by the outward expression of anger, either in word or act. Hence, also, the principles of strict justice would require measures of penalty, not in kind, or measure of duration, but in grade, or degree of torment. We should not lose sight of the fact that all the examples used by Christ were cases of spiritual wrong-doing, and could not be tried by human courts, or proved by human laws; they could only be tried by spiritual laws, in "the Council" of the kingdom of heaven, and "the judgment" administered according to the code of

divine retribution; therefore, the punishment

MUST BE SPIRITUAL AND ETERNAL

That there is no forgiveness for sin in a future state of existence, is apparent from the illustrative enforcement of the principle enunciated in vs. 21, 22, by the commands of vs. 23, 24, and of 25, 26. The whole teaching proceeds upon the assumption that there is forgiveness for spiritual murder, but that the present life is the time, and the only time, to seek and obtain that forgiveness. Mark the use of the word *enokos*, "in danger of," lit. "held fast by, bound, subject to," here, "liable to," i.e., liability to the punishment to be imposed by the tribunal, extending in penal consequences, even as far as, being cast "into the Gehenna of fire." Liability to punishment however, as the consequence of sin, does not necessarily imply suffering the punishment. There may be a mitigation of the sentence, and herein the law and teaching of Christ differed from the law and teaching of Moses.

The conditions upon which the mitigation of the sentence may be obtained are set forth, *first*, in "If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, &c." vs. 23, 24. The principle is reconciliation to man, then reconciliation to God. See 1 John IV: 7, 8 and 20, 21. "Obedience is better than sacrifice." Christ's language implies the urgency of the case, and the importance of immediate and speedy action. An after-death forgiveness is not implied here, but

A "NOW" FORGIVENESS, (2 Cor. VI: 2), "whiles thou art going to church," or "art engaged in daily worship." The urgency of present action in relation to the sin of heart-murder, is manifest in the little word "therefore" in the beginning of ver 23. As if Christ had said "In consequence of the principles I have just enunciated, that all unrighteous anger or wrong feeling against others,

renders thee liable to such terrible punishment, therefore, seek a reconciliation with the one who has any cause of complaint against thee, 'at once'; produce a right spirit, if possible, in the mind of the offended one, i.e., renew friendship with him, and then, thou thyself being in a right frame of mind to truly worship God, mayest ask forgiveness, be accepted, obtain mercy and have the penalty removed."

SECOND—He sets forth the conditions and time of forgiveness in "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way, with him" etc., v. 25, 26. This illustration is drawn from a legal process. The Roman law permitted the plaintiff to become his own constable and compel the other party to go before the magistrate, but it also directed them to agree to a settlement on the way; after the case came before the court there was no chance for reconciliation, the law must take its course, and in this case hopeless imprisonment follows, as indicated by v. 26. Christ, here, by this parabolic illustration, enforces the duty of reconciliation between men, as the condition of man's reconciliation to God; but in Luke XII: 57-59, in the sermon to the Myriads He uses the very same example, to enforce the importance of immediate reconciliation to God, by decision for Christ, in view of the final judgment. Mark you, in both cases, the reconciliation is to be sought "whiles thou art in the way with Him," "as thou art going with thine adversary before the magistrate, on the way give diligence to be quit of him." The spiritual application of "in the way" and "art going" must refer in the former, to present human relationship, and in the latter, to our present probational life, but in neither, to

AFTER-DEATH OPPORTUNITIES.

In Matt., He says, "agree quickly" and in Luke, "give diligence," indicating that the reconciliation was not only to be procured in the present life, but, at

once, without delay, "lest haply" irremediable results follow, for thou knowest not the day that "the adversary will deliver thee to the judge, (by death) and, the judge deliver thee to the officer (of justice), and thou be cast into the prison (of hell)." In both instances, "lest haply" is prohibitory, meaning "lest at any time," "lest perchance," and refers to "agree" in Matt., and "be quit" in Luke, indicating, in each, the purpose of settlement or reconciliation "quickly," "as thou art going," "on the way."

From the above, it is apparent that when the time of punishment has come, it is too late for reconciliation; we must infer from "thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou have paid the last farthing, or the very last mite," the endlessness of the punishment. Canon Farrar says, "If it be asked, 'can this ever be paid?' the answer of course is, as far as the parable is concerned, 'it depends entirely on whether the debt be great or small.' But if it be asserted that no man's debt to God, which he has incurred by his sins, however, 'common to man,' can never be paid by him, we are at least permitted to find hope in the thought that Christ has paid our debt for us. (Matt. XX: 28, 1 Tim. II: 6)" Yes, there is a sense in which Christ has become

OUR 'RANSOM-PRICE,'

but not in the sense of the payment of a debt. *Lutron* (ransom) in Matt. XX: 28, Mark X: 45, and *anti-lutron* (ransom) in 1 Tim. II: 6, the only passages in which the words occur in the New Testament, do not mean to pay a debt for another, but the price given to redeem from bondage, i.e., what is given in exchange for another. As applied to Christ, 'ransom' means that He giving Himself, His life, as a substitute or equivalent, an expiatory sacrifice, for those who were in the hopeless bondage of sin and could not free themselves, procured a means by which every sin-slave

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might liberate himself from the misery and penalty of his guilt. But, though Christ became a slave, and died a slave's death for others, yet their freedom from bondage is conditioned upon their accepting liberty, according to the terms of deliverance. Paul says, (1 Tim. II: 6), "Christ gave himself a ransom (*hyper panton*) for all," i.e., on account of, for the advantage or benefit of 'all men,' hence for the benefit of the whole race. Christ says, (Mat. XX: 28, Mk. X: 45,) of the Son of man, that "He came to give His life a ransom (*anti pollon*) for many," i.e., instead of, in place of 'many'; hence for the many who appropriate the result by faith. In these two passages, a clear distinction is made between the provision of salvation and the acceptance of salvation. It is

PROVIDED FOR ALL, ACCEPTED BY MANY.

The only hope, that Canon Farrar therefore can find, is that which comes from a present acceptance of the offer, and now believing 'unto righteousness', i.e., 'agree with thine adversary quickly (without delay) whiles thou art with him in the way (of thy probation).' 'Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near,' is God's time, and "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" are God's terms. Is. IV: 6, 7. The practical lesson then is, that the forgiveness of God and man should now be sought, in order to avert the consequences of our wrong doing, before it be everlastingly too late. Will it ever be possible for the sinner, who has neglected his probational opportunity and comes unrepentant and unforgiven to the divine tribunal, to pay the last farthing or mite of the debt of sin (here especially anger, the source of murder) to the ad-

versary (the broken law of God)? Evidently, in Christ's view,

THE DEBT CAN NEVER BE PAID.

The removal of the guilt of sin from him who is in this prison, was impossible; the termination of punishment could never be reached. He makes this view emphatic by His solemn assertion, 'verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till &c.' The inference drawn is, not the finality of the condition of punishment, but the non finality, which will be apparent from the following considerations. (1). The punishment though it is limited in the sentence in its terms, is endless in fact, inasmuch as the debtor is bankrupt, and the court will permit no escape until the very smallest consequence of our breach of the law has been discharged. Comp. Chap. XVIII: 23-34. Alford says, these words imply no future liberation, 'because the debt can never be discharged.' (2). Punishment does not pay the debt of sin - Salvation is not procured by anything the sinner can do, suffer, or pay. The sinner has no surplus righteousness, or works of supererogation, with which to cancel the debt of sin, and no amount of torment endured can compensate for the wrong done against the laws of the Kingdom of heaven. (3) Christ is not teaching the forgiveness of sins, through the suffering of the sinner, but through reconciliation between the offender and the offended. Neither is He teaching the possibility, but rather the impossibility, of such reconciliation being secured at any future time, whether in this life or the next. He exhorts that the settlement be made before the court is reached; 'quickly' to make use of the hour of probation, to secure the mercy of God, 'lest' endless punishment, not future forgiveness, should suddenly follow. The absolute necessity of immediate forgiveness is the emphatic idea of the illustration. 'To-day if ye shall hear His voice, hard-

on not your hearts.' Heb IV: 7. Hear-
er, art thou reconciled to God and man?
to the law of thine own conscience? Do
not procrastinate this most important of
all matters.

'BE WISE TO-DAY; 'TIS MADNESS TO DEFER,'
in view of the possible outburst
of divine wrath at any moment.
'Lest at any time,' but that time an un-
known time, thou be cast into eternal
condemnation, an eternal sinner, 'guilty
of eternal sin.' Mk III: 29. There-
fore, O sinner: because God will do thus
unto thee, 'prepare to meet thy God.'
Amos IV: 12.

The second example which Christ uses
to illustrate that He 'came not to destroy
but to fulfil the law' of the whole Mosaic
system, is the law against adultery, Matt.
V: 27-32. Christ is a fulfiller, not
only of O. T. prophecy, types and sym-
bols, but also of the law, universally,
absolutely and spiritually, i.e., He came
to cause God's will (as made known in
the law) to be obeyed as it should be, and
God's promises (given through the proph-
ets) to receive fulfilment. He does this
by teaching the full and true meaning of
the law and its deep underlying princi-
ples; by showing, by His own life, that
the end or object of the law is the devel-
opment of a perfect character; and by
giving the power of obedience, through
a change of heart, thus enabling the sin-
ner to obey the law spontaneously, from
free will and desire, and without any
fear or restraint. As with murder so
with adultery, Christ's interpretation of
the law traced the crime

HOME TO THE HEART,

and condemned the looking with adult-
erous desire, as virtually committing the
act. That is, Christ held as really and
morally guilty, the one who willingly in-
dulged the sensual feeling, and permitted
the evil imagination. If lacking oppor-
tunity, or restraint by fear or shame pre-
vented the outward act, God sees the act

of the imagination and condemns it, as a
violation of the law. As interpreted by
Christ, the penalty for this heart, or moral
violation, is to

'BE CAST INTO HELL,'

Vs. 29 and 30; not that there is no dif-
ference in guilt, between the permitting
of an evil imagination and the actual
overt sin. The evident meaning of vs. 29
and 30 is, that Christ felt that the terrible-
ness of eternal torment was so great, that
it were better to sacrifice anything, no
matter how necessary for the temporal
life, however painful in the operation, or
at whatever cost of feeling, than, that
retaining them, they should 'offend thee',
'cause thee to stumble', R. V.) and thus
run the risk of the awful danger of 'hell-
fire.' The forcefulness of Christ's mean-
ing will be realized in the thoroughness
and unconditional character of the self-
denial, 'pluck it out', 'cut it off', 'cast it
from thee', lest any member however ser-
viceable, or any pleasure however inno-
cent, may bring a temptation that occa-
sions sin. In the original, 'offend thee'
or 'cause thee to stumble' means 'entice
thee to sin', 'allure thee to destruction',
'tempt or entrap thee to ruin.' Christ
says in effect, 'Lest thou be cast into
hell,' not only give up the sinful act, but
make an unconditional self-denial of
whatever tempts thyself, thy neighbor
or the community into sinful actions.
(See Matt. XVIII: 7-9, Mk. IX: 42-
48.) 'For it is profitable, i.e., it is better,
more expedient, for thee that any 'one of
thy members, even 'thy right,' most im-
portant and most useful one, 'should
perish,' and that thou 'enter into life
maimed,' 'and not thy whole body
be cast into hell.' The Great Phy-
sician, that He may save the life of the
soul from eternal death, resorts to the
most

EXTREME SURGICAL OPERATION.

He sees that the whole is in danger from
a part, therefore, the part must be cut

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off, that the life may be saved eternally. From this, we see an awful significance in the words of Christ concerning the reality and terribleness of hell. His language plainly declares that the earth life and not the Gehenna existence, is the time to get rid of sin, and of that which leads to destruction, the words implying not only completeness but quickness of sacrifice. The principle of self-denial is a basic doctrine in man's development, either the body or the soul must be denied in the hour of temptation. Jos. Parker says: 'Deny the body, and the soul comes to the front and floods your life with sacred light, with heaven's splendor. Gratify the body, and the soul retires and its hot tears fall in the hearing of God.' If this were all, it were well, but Christ most emphatically declares that to indulge the body means hell for the soul. Lyman Abbott says: 'The greatest self-sacrifice is really for our self interest,' and so said Paul, Rom. VIII: 13; 1 Cor. IX: 27; Col. III: 5. But the place of sacrifice is here—'this life,' Eccl. IX: 10, and the time—now—'To-day,' Heb III: 7. The murderer and the adulterer may be forgiven their sins, but

ONLY UPON REPENTANCE,

i.e., by plucking out, cutting off, and casting away, not only the sin itself, but the very desire to sin, and this not in Gehenna, but, in order to prevent going into Gehenna. 'Cast thy sins from thee, that thou with thy sins be not cast into hell'—Sinner, you or your sins must be cast away forever, which shall it be? Christ holds out no hope for either future probation or final restoration. He says, 'be cast into Gehenna' not into 'Hades,' where Future Probationists say the sinner will have another chance for salvation; in thought He carries the unrepentant, unforgiven sinner, right through the intermediate state of the lost, into the final hell, without any hope of recovery.

Yes, "cast into hell," without hope of recovery, either through forgiveness in a future state, or through a restoration by suffering in that state. Punishment is either for correction to reform the offender, for prevention to deter others, or for retribution to inflict a deserved penalty. The first two, God as our Father and Sovereign, exercises toward us in this life, Heb. XII: 10, 11 but the last, when He becomes judge and sits upon a throne of judgment and not of mercy. 2 Pet. II: 9. The Father loves the child and provides salvation, Jno. III: 16, but the judge inflicts penalty 'without mercy', Heb. X: 28-31. Also be it observed that

GEHENNA WAS NOT A PLACE OF PURIFYING to the things cast into it; its fires burned for the purifying of that which was not cast in.

The air and water of Jerusalem were kept pure and the city rendered inhabitable, by the fires, constantly burning in the valley of Hinnom (Gehenna), consuming all the refuse and filth from the city and temple. The city, not the garbage and dead carcasses, was purified by the 'burning Gehenna'; in like manner, the new Jerusalem is purified and rendered an eternal abode of happiness for the righteous, by casting the moral refuse of the universe and the dead bodies of sin, 'into hell,' (Gehenna). Thus it will be seen that the fires of hell are not purgatorial, and it no sense for the purpose of restoring the sinner to righteousness; it is because of this that Christ enforces His solemn injunction with an emphatic 'I say unto you.' This idea of Gehenna, being the receptacle for the moral and spiritual filth and rottenness of humanity, is carried out in the letters of Paul, 1 Cor. VI: 9, 10; Gal. V: 19-21; Col. III: 5, 6; and Eph. V: 5, and in the vision of John, Rev. XX: 14, 15; XXI: 8; and XXII: 15.

It should be noted, that in the examples which Christ uses to illustrate the

spiritual character of the law in His Kingdom, have their application in the fitness for present citizenship in that Kingdom. His thought is, 'the kingdom of heaven is at hand', that He is now engaged in establishing it in this world; that citizenship consists not in mere abstinence from forbidden deeds, or obedience by outward constraint or mechanical conformity to written law, but in a

SPONTANEOUS, SPIRITUAL SERVICE,

growing out of a heart-felt love to God and man. 'For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed (excel) the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven', in this world, and consequently cannot in the world to come. Clearly then, He refers to a present kingdom, and to present admission and citizenship in that kingdom, and not to any after-death experience or post-mortem salvation. If spiritual disobedience excludes from the kingdom of grace and of glory, now and forever, what hope is there for those who are disobedient in act, and in life? If eternal death in hell be 'the end of them', who become citizens in Christ's kingdom, and 'obey not the Gospel of God' in its highest and spiritual sense, 'what shall be the end of them that refuse belief and obedience in the Gospel of God' and never become members of His kingdom?

The Sermon on the mount sets forth the character of the kingdom of heaven as a

KINGDOM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

and may be divided into four general divisions. (1) Ch. V: 3-16. The characteristics of true citizenship in the kingdom; the privileges and responsibility of subjects. (2) V: 17-48. The relation of the laws of the kingdom of heaven to the law of the Mosaic dispensation. (3) VI: 1-34; VII: 1-6. The principle of life in Christ's kingdom contrasted with a life of external formalism. (4) VII: 7-27. How to become children-subjects

of the family kingdom of our Heavenly Father.

The 2nd Division is (doctrinal) and the 3rd practical. In Ch. VI: 1-18, He denounces all religious show as contrary to a spiritual life in His kingdom; this He does by contrasting the hollow hearted religious formalism of Pharisaism with true righteousness of life. He makes the contrasts by taking practical examples from the actual religious life of the Pharisees 1st, vs. 1-4. Alms giving, 2nd, 5-15. Prayer and 3rd, 16-18, Fasting. He pronounces as hypocrites, all who do their righteousness before men, whether it be alms-giving, praying or fasting. That is, all those, the acts of whose outward religious life, are done with the sole object 'to be seen of men,' are hypocrites. Men cannot but see our acts, in fact they are to judge of the tree by its fruit, but as Wordsworth says: 'We are to be seen to do good, but not to do good to be seen.' In the three examples given, Christ sounds a note of warning against the profession of religion without the possession. This warning rings out in the introductory words, 'take heed,' i.e., be upon your guard, beware, lest you 'do your righteousness' for mere human applause; thus, you become hypocrites, i.e., actors, stage-players, those who put on religion as an actor puts on his character, merely for performance or personal advantage. The act may be right, but the motive wrong. All such selfish religious actors

HAVE THE HYPOCRITES REWARD.

vs. 2, 5, 16.

Chief among the great glories of a true religious life and of works of righteousness done from a pure, unselfish motive, is not citizenship in the kingdom of heaven, but 'reward with your Father.' That is, our Heavenly Father has wages reserved for a waiting those who are doing their righteousness, solely, for the glory of God. But those who do their righteousness for public applause, 'have

no reward with your Father.' Not, that they have no reward, for Christ not only declares that they have a reward, but that 'they have received their reward.' Observe, that 'they have their reward' means literally, 'that they have received their reward in full', i.e., public applause is the reward they seek and all the reward they will ever get. The examples given are a contrast of real spiritual life with mere formal service, of the rewards of our Heavenly Father with the rewards of men, and of the rewards of time with the rewards of eternity. Only righteous deeds, from right motives will receive any reward with God; also the fullness of reward can only be received in the final heaven, after judgment. See Matt. XVI: 27; Rom. II: 6, 2 Cor. V: 10; Rev. XXII: 12. Men must bestow their rewards in *this life*, and those who seek such wages, receive the short-lived praise of man; *that* is their heaven, but it is as a breath which vanisheth and their heaven is gone—gone, forever. Christ's teaching is, not that such selfish righteousness, merely results in a loss of rewards in heaven, but that it results in the loss of Heaven itself.

THE HYPOCRITE'S REWARD IS HELL.

See Matt XXIII: 13, XXIV: 51; Comp Rev. XXI: 8, XXII: 15. His teaching is, that 'ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven, except your righteousness exceed *this external righteousness* of the Scribes and Pharisees.' Though regarding themselves as followers of God, yet they have not really entered in to the kingdom of heaven, and should therefore 'take heed' and enter now, 'else ye have no reward with your Father which is in heaven.' Notice, it is not 'ye have no reward,' neither 'no reward from, (or of) your Father,' but it is 'no reward with your Father.' They received their hire in the present payment of a personal reputation, all that they sought, and lost the payment of Heavenly reward. Mark the distinction between 'reward from

(or of) your Father' and 'reward with your Father.' The full reward of Pharisaic righteousness is not spoken of; nor is it intimated that God has no reward for such, but simply that they receive a 'present earthly reward and lose a future and heavenly.' There is a reward 'from or of God' for both the righteous and the unrighteous. See Eze. XII: 14, Rom. XIV: 12, 2 Cor. V: 10, Gal. VI: 7, Col. III: 24, 25, Rev. XXII: 12. For the unrighteous and the mere formalist, the reward is endurance of a final separation from 'your Father which is in heaven,' with all that that signifies and includes, as awfully set forth by Christ in the 'Depart from Me,' of Matt. VII: 23, XXV: 41, Luke XIII: 27. The reward of the truly righteous is

"REWARD WITH YOUR FATHER

which is in heaven." R. V. 'With your Father,' *lit.*, 'in the place where your Father is, in the society of your Father'. In the original "with," ("of," in, &c.) is *para*, followed by the dative, signifying something is or is done in the immediate vicinity of some one, i.e., by the side of, near by, in the presence of, in one's house, in one's society. Hence the reward is laid up with God in heaven, and the rewarded will enjoy it in the mansions of 'My Father's house,' in heavenly society with our Father. In these practical examples of applied religion, there certainly is no offer of a future probation or final restoration. Christ plainly declares that the results are finally fixed for eternity, by the kind of righteousness done in this life. His words are emphatic, 'Take heed * * * * else ye have no reward,' 'Verily I say unto you that ye have received their reward'. H Clay Trumbull in the S. S. Times, says: 'There's all the difference here between selling grain and planting.' Selling grain for cash, you get your return at once. Planting grain, you look for your return in the harvest.'

Friend, what is your present righteousness? What shall be your reward? Shall

it be a hypocrite's, in hell, or a righteous man's, 'with your Father which is in heaven'? Are you *selling* yourself, in this life, for a mess of pottage, or are you *sowing* unto the Spirit, that you may of the Spirit reap eternal life? What shall the harvest be? In the fourth division of His sermon, He sets forth

HOW TO BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD,
the necessity of which has been impressed in the 3rd division by such declarations, exhortations and commands, as 'ye cannot serve God and mammon' 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness.' 'First cast out the beam out of thine own eye.' The two conditions of becoming children of God, and entering the kingdom of heaven, are, (1) Prayer of faith in God as your Father. Ch. p. VII: 7-12. (2) Separation from the world and obedience to your Father's instructions, and warnings. vs 13-27. In these conditions, it is assumed that entrance into Christ's kingdom is conditional, and contingent upon all the terms, being complied with in this life. Certainly, seeking the kingdom of God is first, in order of time, and in order of importance. Throughout the sermon, Christ deals with two classes of characters in this life, and assigns these to two different places or conditions in the future life. The central idea of the sermon, is the present kingdom of heaven on earth, not the future kingdom of heaven in eternity. A kingdom made up of God-like men, of which God, our Father, is king, i.e.,

A FAMILY KINGDOM, UNDER A FATHER KING, WITH CHILDREN-SUBJECTS.

In vs 13, 14, there is evidently the idea of an enclosure, as the basis of the figure. The kingdom of heaven, is something to be entered into, something that requires effort, and sacrifice to obtain. The condition of obedience, follows close upon that of the prayer of faith, and opens with an exhortation, implying the impor-

ance of immediate action. The imagery, is that of a 'strait (narrow) gate,' a little door, in a 'wide (broad) gate,' the general city gates, and of that of a 'broad (spacious) way,' regular thoroughfare, thronged with crowds, and in it a 'narrow (compressed) way,' a company of travelers, crowded by the throng. The 'narrow way' of the kingdom of heaven, is in the 'broad way' of the kingdoms of this world. Notice, the 'narrow way' is not the kingdom of 'eternal life,' but leadeth unto it, and the 'broad way' is not the kingdom of 'eternal destruction,' but leadeth thereto. Also notice, the gate is not placed at the end of the way, but at the beginning, as opening into it. The exhortation is, 'enter' the narrow way of Christian life and duty, by the straight gate of self-denial, and separation from the world.

The exhortation, 'enter ye in by the narrow gate,' is enforced by two reasons, each beginning with 'for' (because), in which the wide gate and broad way are contrasted with the strait gate and narrow way, to illustrate the entrance to, and destiny of a life of sin, as compared with a life of righteousness. The exhortation is given as if addressed to those who are in the broad way, with the purpose of leading them to forsake the 'many that enter in the broad way of destruction by the wide gate,' and join 'the few that find the straitened way of life, by the narrow gate.' There surely can be no other meaning taken out of this exhortation, and the reasons assigned for acting in accordance with it, than that of salvation, as a fact of the present, and only, of the present life. 'Enter,' refers to immediate action, 'the narrow gate' to the one, only right entrance, and 'the straitened way' to the kingdom of heaven on earth, which leads to 'life,' the kingdom of heaven in glory. All who do not 'enter in by the narrow gate,' remain in the broad way 'that leadeth to destruction.' Re-

member, it is a gate within a gate, a way within a way, but not a destination within a destination. As there is a gate or entrance to each way, so there is a destination or end to each. The broad way

'LEADETH TO DESTRUCTION,'

and the narrow way 'leadeth unto life,' opposite terminations. 'Destruction' does not mean annihilation, but ruin, in the sense of loss. It is here used as opposed to 'life,' and means, the destruction which consists in the loss of 'life' eternal. It is equivalent to eternal misery, i.e., the lot of those excluded from the kingdom of God. It should be observed that 'destruction,' as here used by Christ, is not the same word as used by Paul in our text, 2 Thess. I: 9. There, the word is *olethros*, destruction in the sense of ruin; here it is *apoleia*, a stronger and more intensive word, meaning destruction, in the sense of utter loss or ruin, by force. The idea is not so much loss of something as loss from something, and here, as elsewhere in the N. T., refers to loss of eternal life, with special reference to that state after death, wherein, exclusion from salvation is a realized fact, and man, instead of becoming what he might have been, is lost and ruined. It must be borne in mind, that according to the Gospel conception,

ETERNAL LIFE BEGINS ON EARTH,

just as soon as one becomes united to Christ by faith, and conversely, those are in the way of eternal destruction (loss of eternal life) who are not actual partakers of salvation; to them it belongs to perish, i.e., to be consigned to eternal misery. Jno. III: 36.

Some explain 'narrow way' as referring to 'the Way' which early became a distinctive appellation of the Christian religion. (See Acts IX: 2; XIX: 9, 23; XXIV: 14 R-V); and 'broad way,' to a general thoroughfare that led to that place outside the city walls, where the offal, and refuse of the city were burned, i.e., *gehenna*. There is a striking sig-

nificance in this explanation, quite in harmony with Christ's teachings, which seems to be borne out by what follows. The strength of His exhortation rests not so much upon the difference in the character of the two ways, as the difference in the destination. But He makes the difference in the destination to depend entirely upon the present entering, and not upon some subsequent change. So intent is He upon enforcing this thought that he sounds forth

A WORD OF CAUTION,

in vs. 15-20. As if he had said: "Most important is it that 'ye enter in by the narrow gate,' now, and for a certainty be in 'the way that leadeth to (eternal) life,' and from thence, ye must therefore be on your guard against any guides that would not lead you to the narrow gate, or that would turn you aside from the narrow way, when once you have entered upon it. I not only warn you against the wide gate, and the broad way, but against any teachers whose lives, or teachings might lead thereto." 'Beware of false prophets', not only contains a caution, but is a caution from unexpected danger, to avoid which, immediate, not future action is called for.

Fellow traveller to the bar of God, have you entered by the narrow gate of prayer and repentance into the kingdom of heaven? Are you now walking in the narrow way of faith and obedience that leadeth unto life in Christ now, and with your Father in heaven hereafter? In which way are you travelling? Where will the journey terminate?

"What after death for me remains?
Celestial joys, or hellish pains,
To all eternity!"

'DEPART FROM ME, YE THAT WORK INIQUITY.'

v. 23. What mean these terrible words, rendered more terrible when we think who it was that spake them? To whom are they applied? When will they be ut-

tered? Why were they pronounced? When? 'In that day' of final judgment—To whom? 'False prophets,' (teachers) whose lives will not bear the fruit test of vs. 16-20 'Every one that doeth not the will of my Father.' 'And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not.' By whom? 'I,' Jesus, whom you have known by name only, now your Saviour, then your Judge. Meaning? That, 'every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.' Why? 'I never knew you,' because, as Augustine says, 'ye never knew me.' He only is known who also knows, experimentally. (See John X: 14, 15, and 2 Tim. II: 19) Why? Because ye are workers of iniquity, notwithstanding that 'ye prophesied (taught) by my name, and by my name cast out devils (demons), and by my name did many mighty works (powers).' It must certainly be apparent to every unbiassed mind, that the passage, vs. 21-23, shows conclusively, that mere profession and outward works will not give assurance in judgment, and admission to glory. That the only passport to eternal bliss, is practical obedience in the daily doings of this present life, springing from

A LOVE OF GOD, NOT FEAR OF HELL,

which love arises from a reciprocal heart knowledge between the sinner and God, and the enjoyment of a spiritual life, common with God.

A free, and more literal rendering of the passage will make this clearly a forecast. 'Not every one who (willingly) saith to me (i.e., is now saying to me) Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven (which I am to set up in the future); but, (amongst those who do this) only he who does (i.e., is now doing) the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many shall say to me in that (great) day (the day of judgment), 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy (i.e., preach and teach), by Thy name (i.e., by means of Thy name), and

by (i.e., through, by name cast, or drive out demons, and by means of Thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess (i.e., declare openly) to them (in the presence of men and Angels. Matt. XXV: 31-32). I never knew you (i.e., I have never recognized you as being my disciples, although you have done all these things, with my name upon your lips, yet your heart was far from me); depart from me, (i.e., take yourselves away from me, ye were not of my kingdom in time, and cannot now enter it in eternity), because ye are those that work iniquity, (i.e., all the works that you have done, are to you as if they had been works of unrighteousness, therefore you, who have cast out demons, being demoniacal at heart, must depart from me as if you were yourselves, demons, Matt. XXV: 41)' Assuredly their works of iniquity relate to the earthly life, and though the Hades existence is passed through, they come to judgment unrepentant, to receive condemnation for those works. They were NOT CHRIST'S IN TIME, THEY CANNOT BE IN ETERNITY.

Lyman Abbott says on 'depart from me' 'God now abides even with those who depart, that he may lead them to repentance. (Rom. II: 4.) He will then separate them from him for ever. (2 Thess. I: 9)' And he says on vs. 21-23: 'Compare with this entire passage, 1 Cor. XIII: 1-3, and observe that the only passage where Christ victoriously describes the judgment scene, the judgment is portrayed as dependent upon the course of daily life, (Matt XXV: 31-46); and that the sentence, as recorded in Rev. XXII: 11, 12, is a simple fixing, eternally and irreversibly, of the character formed here.'

'Depart from me' is emphatic and imperative, and being spoken 'in that day,' conveys the idea, not only of final and eternal separation from Christ, but implies a depart-

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ure to some place. But what is that place where there is no Christ? What is that place which is made the abode of workers of iniquity? Is it not hell? In this 'domain of darkness,' does not Christ declare that it is as well as a place of eternal separation from God with demons? We come now to the close of the Sermon on the Mount, and surely no one will doubt that Christ did therein clearly and unmistakably teach the fact of a hell, and the certainty of the punishment of the wicked in that hell. The whole discourse is a most solemn and direct appeal to the conscience of every man to enter 'the kingdom of heaven' as a means of the present salvation of the soul; and a setting forth the terrible consequences of not entering 'the kingdom' as a loss of the soul in hell, without any hope of salvation in some future state of existence. If this be not the objective point in His preaching then the Sermon is meaningless. We shall see this more forcibly if we have a true conception of the phrase

"KINGDOM OF HEAVEN,"

and its equivalent 'Kingdom of God,' as used by Christ. The expression means the kingdom which is of heavenly or divine origin and nature. To the Jews, it meant the direct rule of God, the theocracy or God-government; and relying, principally upon the prophecies of Daniel, they were expecting a kingdom of the greatest felicity, which God, through the Messiah would set up, and in it they would bear away forever and ever over all nations of the world. Jesus, as was His wont, took up these well-known words and gave them a new, deep and varied spiritual significance, which he illustrates throughout His teaching. Thayer says: 'He employs the phrase to indicate that perfect order of things which He was about to establish, in which, all those of every nation who should believe in Him, were to be gathered together into one society, dedicated, and intimately

united to God, and made partakers of eternal salvation.' Lyman Abbott says: "The phrase 'kingdom of heaven', or the synonymous phrase 'kingdom of God,' in the Gospels never means the visible, external, organic church, and rarely, if ever, the future state in contrast with the present, but the reign of God in the individual soul, or in the community." Jesus taught both Jews and Gentiles in His day that it was necessary to change their views of truth, their conceptions of God and His kingdom, and their moral purposes concerning life, in order to a right apprehension and true entering of the kingdom of God. Matt III: 2, IV: 17. In like manner, it may be necessary for many of us to change preconceived notions of 'the kingdom of heaven' as being only the place of future blessedness beyond this life. That is, we must learn to see in that expression more than

A PLACE AND STATE OF THE DEAD.

'who die in the Lord,' but rather the Messianic kingdom on earth, the present state of salvation. From Jno. III: 3, 5, it is very evident that this kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, and cannot be seen and entered 'except a man be born again,' but that it may be realized, and must be entered now, is apparent from vs. 14-17. The kingdom of heaven is in this world, but not of it; it originated in heaven, it ends in heaven; the kingdom on earth and the kingdom in heaven are one. It is

"THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AND OF GOD,"

(Ephs. V: 5), because Christ as God, is founder and king. Christ came into this world to establish the kingdom among men, by providing for present citizenship and securing present subjects. 'Our Father, it is 'Thy kingdom' in which 'Thy will is done on earth, as it is in heaven.' It is the consummation of the Father's will in the heart of the individual or in the community, (Luke XVII: 21, Rom. XIV: 17); and has reference both to the present and future life, and

to the blessings in time and eternity. Citizenship in 'the kingdom' is secured, not by death of the body, but by death to sin, Rom. VI: 2, 11; 1 Pet. II: 24. In securing that citizenship, Christ, throughout His teaching, constantly refers to the kingdom as 'at hand,' and exhorts to present repentance as the necessary condition of admission to that kingdom, (Matt. IV: 17); giving as one of the reasons for immediate repentance the nearness and presence of the kingdom (Matt. X: 7, Luke IX: 2, X: 9). The evident conclusion from all this, must be, that heaven above is only a consummation of heaven below, and must be entered on earth to be enjoyed in glory. Citizenship is now or never; there must be the heavenly character in time, if there would be the heavenly destiny throughout eternity. Death can make no change in our relation to the kingdom of heaven, only a change of our location in the kingdom; the kingdom in the heavenly state is but the complement of the kingdom in the earthly state—here it is inauguration, there it is completion. Its entrance is by repentance, not by punishment, and Christ's emphatic imperative, 'Repent ye,' indicates that the repentance must be now.

IN HEAVEN WHEN YOU ARE DEAD, means heaven in the heart and life, while you live. It is the kingdom of righteousness and truth, in the soul of him 'that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.' The kingdom of heaven which Christ exhorts us to enter into, is a *state*, and not a *place*, location has nothing to do with it, only as to degrees of enjoyment and perfection of blessedness. Hell, He always presents as the result of a loss of the present heavenly state, and not because of exclusion from a future heavenly place. This is evident from the symbol which He uses at the conclusion of the Sermon to illustrate the test of true religion.

Christ closes His sermon with a prac-

tical application that, solemnly, applies the whole sermon, not only to all teachers, but to each hearer. VII: 24-27.

'Every one therefore which heareth these words of mine.' The contrast is 'between the mere hearer and the doer: Obedience to Christ's words is the only means of admission to, and of safety in 'the kingdom of heaven.' There must be a *doing* that springs from *believing* 'upon the rock,' Christ Jesus. 1 Cor. III: 11. Every one that would not fall through 'the rains' of this life's afflictions, 'the floods' of worldly, and satanic temptations, and 'the winds' of the final judgment, must not only hear, but do 'these sayings of mine,' just uttered throughout the Sermon.

HELL IS HEAVEN IN RUINS.

The question often asked with anxiety, is: 'Are we sure that we shall be admitted to heaven?' as if there were no possible means of knowing, for a certainty, *now*. We can know by examining the foundation on which we are building. None are shut out from heaven arbitrarily, but as the result of individual action. Each man is a builder, and is building a mansion in, and for himself 'that eternally shall stand,' or a structure, that shall become a ruin forever. The stability of each building depends not entirely upon the structure, but upon the foundation. The question therefore should not be, 'Shall I, at death, enter heaven?' but 'Has heaven entered my heart?'; not 'Shall I be admitted into heaven in the sweet by and by?' but 'Am I admitted now?' This is the burden of the whole sermon so strikingly enforced by His closing illustration. The contrast is between a wise and a foolish man, not between a good and a bad man; and the wisdom and folly was manifested not in the building, but in the choice of foundation. The result of their equal opportunity of hearing, equal liberty in choice of a site, and equal effort in building, is revealed in the little word 'not.'

'Every one therefore, which heareth these words of Mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, which built his house upon the rock * *

* * * ; and it fell *not*; because it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth these words of Mine, and doeth them *not*, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand. * * *

* * * ; and *it fell*; and the ruin of that house was great.' Comp. Luke VI: 48—49. Why 'was the fall thereof *great*? Why a *great ruin*? Not merely because of loss of present advantage or immediate paradisaical bliss, but because of the loss of all that the soul had lived and worked for, and that for ever. To that builder it was the kingdom of heaven in eternal ruin; it was

THE MAN HIMSELF IN EVERLASTING RUINS.

Oh What a picture! Is this not hell enough? Is not this a future punishment? Is not the whole scene a picture of the 'destruction' of v. 13 in contrast with 'the life' of v. 14, and of the Messianic judgment described in Matt XXV: 31—46? Can any one find in these words any support for future probation, final restoration, or annihilation? Will not any honest man who is only seeking the plain teaching of Christ, admit that an eternal loss of heaven is therein set forth unconditionally and absolutely? The ruin is a finality, and certainly results from building on a wrong foundation during a present state of trial, hence there can be no future probation. Being a finality of result there can be no final restoration, neither is such a thing hinted at in the scene before us. It is not annihilation, the house not being destroyed absolutely, as in 1 Cor. III: 15 where the total loss of heavenly rewards is represented in the sweeping away of the building by fire, there the foundation is left, and abiding thereupon, 'the man himself shall be saved' and may

'build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones' in a future state; here the building is still in existence, but in ruins, ruins for ever, a finality of condition, but not a destruction of existence.

Thus ended the Sermon of Him who

"TAUGHT THEM AS ONE HAVING AUTHORITY,"

leaving His hearers under the impression that a man might be irrecoverably lost, that a lost soul is a great ruin in the sight of God, and that unless each hearer lays a foundation in Christ by faith and builds a character thereupon by real hearty obedience to Him (1 Cor. III: 10—15) he will realize the terrible disaster pictured in the ruin of the fallen edifice. We thus learn that Christ's thought in the Sermon is that hell is loss of heaven, but what that hell is, we shall see in future teaching and illustrations. He also shows us that loss of heaven is wholly dependent upon choice and action in this life, and solemnly enforces this by the principle of testing character, exemplified in these two suggestive pictures. He began His Sermon with 'Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' i.e., Blessed are those who feeling within them a deep spiritual need, turn to God with anxious, receptive spirits, and asking, seeking hearts; for to them the door of the kingdom swings open at once, or rather the kingdom itself enters into the heart emptied of self and sin, and theirs is now, not in a future state only, 'the kingdom of heaven.' He ended with a most terrible warning, showing the consequence of not having obtained salvation in the kingdom. The Sermon opens with blessedness to the obedient—blessedness with promise, and closes with destruction of the disobedient—destruction without hope.

Who questions 'His authority,' or rejects 'these sayings'?

OUT OF HEAVEN IS INTO HELL.

Suffer me to urge you not to cherish any false hope of salvation; know at once,

are you building on the right foundation? Can you say, (His spirit bearing witness with yours.)

"On Christ, the Solid Rock I stand;
And all beside is shifting sand."

The Sermon on the Mount was an inaugural address, a speech from the throne, in which the principles and policy of the kingdom of heaven is fully announced. Future Punishment, as the consequence of failure to enter the heavenly kingdom, is one of the inherent principles of teaching, and an avowed policy of government. Having declared the fact of future punishment, in hell, what follows in parable and illustration, is an explanation of that fact. As previously observed, this can only be brought to our minds by similitudes; therefore let us carefully collect these vivid pictures drawn by the Divine Artist.

In Matt. VIII: 12, punishment in hell, as in contrast with the joy of heaven is spoken of as being "CAST FORTH INTO THE OUTER DARKNESS: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth," i.e., cast forth into the darkness outside the house in which the banquet is going on: and there shall be, in that darkness, a feeling of sorrow and rage on account of the rejection. In v. 11, 'the kingdom of heaven' is likened to the society, joy and festivity of a feast in a brilliantly lighted banqueting-house. The fate of those who are excluded from the kingdom is represented in vs. 12, as the very opposite of enjoying such a feast, but as being cast out to wander, during the chilly night, in the narrow, filthy, *totally* dark streets, exposed to robbers and dogs. The 'outer darkness,' is an image of the deep horror of hell, and 'the weeping and gnashing of teeth' of the utter despair of a soul excluded from heaven. The representation is not of some degree of future punishment, but of the punishment itself as exclusion from God and the company of the holy, indicating that suffering and despair accom-

panies such exclusion. Lyman Abbott says: 'For the most part the Bible representations of future punishment are of a fixity in a state of sin, (Rev. XXII: 11, R. V.), and of banishment from the presence of God, (2 Thess. I: 9, R. V.) In the R. V., notice the article, 'the,' of the original, before 'outer darkness,' and before 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' which is ignored in the A. V. This emphatically indicates a positive locality to hell, 'the outer darkness,' and in it conscious suffering, 'the weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Also notice that those cast forth are 'the sons of the kingdom,' i.e., the Jews who, because of natural descent and covenant, regarded themselves as belonging to the kingdom.

Nominal Christian, what a fearful truth, that men may be cast forth who are by birth and education, natural 'children of the kingdom.' Child of praying parents and of a Christian home, are you a child of God inwardly, or merely a child of 'the kingdom' outwardly?

In the instructions which Christ gives the twelve, when he sends them forth on their trial mission, recorded in Chap. X, He gives them their commission, warns them of the persecution to be met with, and encourages them to the endurance of suffering even unto death. That for the sake of the soul's salvation they were to wade through martyrdom itself. He impresses this upon their minds, in the threatened destruction of v. 28, 'but rather fear Him which is able to

DESTROY BOTH SOUL AND BODY IN HELL.

Note the distinction between soul and body. From "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," it is evident that the body may be dead and the soul alive. Man may *kill* the body but not the soul; he can *destroy* neither. God is able to *destroy* both, 'in hell.' It has been argued by some, from this and similar expressions, that the punishment of the wicked is an ab-

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absolute destruction of existence, not a living in suffering. In reply let us observe the distinction made between 'kill' and 'destroy.' When speaking of what may be done to the body by man, He uses the word *apokteino*, to kill completely, i.e., to take away life in any way; but when declaring what God can do to both soul and body, He uses *apollumi*, to destroy in the sense of ruin or loss. It is not to take away the life of soul or body, or to annihilate their existence, but to incur loss of true or eternal life, to devote, or give over to eternal misery. It is loss and ruin, not of existence, but in existence. Cremer says: "The fundamental thought is not by any means *annihilation*, but perhaps *corruption*, an injurious force, which the subject exerts, or cannot hinder." Also observe that

THE DESTRUCTION IS NOT HELL;

for it takes place in hell, (*Gehenna*.) The idea is, that both the soul and the body after the resurrection and general judgment, are consigned to hell for destruction. But how long will it take God to destroy the immortal-resurrection body and soul? How long will it take to destroy the indestructible? How long! *For ever and ever*. The destruction is 'eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the *glory of His might*,' ever being destroyed yet never destroyed. If future punishment is annihilation of *being*, then there is no hell, and the soul and body could not be destroyed in it.

Evidently, from this text, there is a possible reality of suffering after this life, that is worse and more to be feared than bodily death. Fear this suffering, as far beyond any evil man can inflict. Yes, my friend, fear this destruction of soul and body. Man can only kill the body, but remember God *'is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.'* No man, but yourself, can kill or destroy your soul; you can kill your own

soul in this life, and destroy it in the life which is to come. God's destruction is only a perpetuation of such spiritual self-murder. Will you be guilty of moral suicide? Will you be destroyed 'in hell'?

Christ, in His teaching, most unequivocally and positively connects certain results in the future world with the course pursued and the character attained in the present life, thus fixing, beyond a doubt, the idea that

PUNISHMENT AND NOT PROBATION COMES after death. His words in Matt. X: 32, 33, are very explicit. *Lit.* 'Every one therefore who shall confess in me before men in him, will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny (disown) me before men, him will I also deny (disown) before my Father which is in heaven;' or as in Luke XII: 8, 9, 'shall be denied before the angels of God,' and, if possible, still more decisive in Mk. VIII: 38, when referring to the judgment-day. 'For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.'

Confession and denial represent external manifestations, shame expresses inward feeling. Upon the part of man these acts and state belong to this life, 'before, or in the presence of men,' 'in

* * * this generation'. Upon Christ's part they refer to the intermediate state, 'before my Father which is in heaven,' 'before the angels of God;' and also to the second advent and general judgment, 'when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.' There is no hint of a different result because of any change occurring between death and judgment. The meaning is, "disown," Me in time and I will "disown" you in eternity, "be ashamed" of Me in your

probation and I will "be ashamed" of you at My judgment. The recompense at the time of final decision, to the denier of Christ, is not given in a spirit of retaliation, but as the necessary consequence of not confessing in Christ, "in this adulterous and sinful generation"; it is the completion of that particular judgment which begins in the case of each man immediately at death, and which is conditioned upon the decisions of our present moral probation. Christ simply responds to the actions of men, 'before men', when they have the privilege of choice, and the effect of denial is, the denier is denied.

"HIM WILL I DENY."

How much is crowded into this sentence! An eternity of torments is here compressed into a single word, *deny*. Who can decipher the condition of a sinner denied by Christ? It is the sentence of a court from which there is no appeal. 'In this generation,' 'if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous' (1 John II: 2) but 'when He cometh in the glory of His Father,' 'it shall not be forgiven him' * * *, neither in the world to come.' (Matt. XII: 32). At that day, Jesus ceases to be an Advocate and becomes a Judge. 'Whom mercy has condemned justice will not absolve.' The darkness and misery of denial by Christ emphasized the *destruction* of v. 28, and is a consummation of the being ashamed of Christ, and the denial of Him 'in the presence of men.' It will be the final determination of such persons in their relation to 'the kingdom of heaven.' It is the announcement of self-destined exclusion, having chosen sides against Christ.

Are you ashamed of Jesus? Are you denying Christ? Or are you confessing Him before men in this generation? Think of the terrible doom of being denied by Christ.

"WOE UNTO THEM,"

because they repented not. Matt. XI:

20-24. R.V. In these woes Christ most strongly sets forth that the ground of eternal condemnation is not on account of a want of belief in the message, but because of a lack of that kind of faith that leads to repentance, (Matt. IV: 17). These words of warning, weighted with the sorrow of Christ's loving, weeping heart, pronounced a dark doom, in order that that doom might not be fulfilled. The denunciations were because of a present rejection of the Gospel, which is clearly brought out in Luke X: 1-16 especially in 'he that rejecteth you rejecteth Me; and he that rejecteth Me rejecteth Him that sent Me.' 'He began to upbraid the cities,' when sufficient warning and sufficient opportunity had been given to lead them to repent of their sins. 'In the day of judgment' has undoubted reference to the day of final account, when the people of every place on the earth, and in every period of its history, will be judged according to the opportunities and privileges of the individual. This evidenced by 'it shall be more tolerable' * * *

in the day of judgment, than for thee,' of vs. 22, 24 and Matt. X: 15. In the comparison of Chorazin and Bethsaida with Tyre and Sidon, and Capernaum with Sodom and Gomorrah there is no thought of possible repentance for these ancient peoples in *hades*, but rather the thought that, in the judgment, they will stand relatively as they did in the day of their probational opportunity. These cities, especially Sodom, were used as

SYMBOLS OF ETERNAL WRATH.

See Jude v. 7, Rev. XX: 10, 14, XXI: 8. The fiery rain that had destroyed the cities of the plain in 'a lake of fire' is set forth as the visible emblem of that hell-fire which, all who reject the opportunities of salvation, are subjected to, after the judgment. The passage under consideration does not teach punishment

for some, but for all the people that refused to repent and act up to *their* light; not partial or limited punishment as to time, but difference in severity as to intensity of suffering, based upon the degree of guilt, the degree of guilt being according to the privilege enjoyed. (Luke XII: 47, 48, Rom. II: 6-23). The punishment is a penalty affixed after judging the merits of each case. It is character, not privilege, that takes to heaven and saves from hell. 'And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted to heaven?' because of thy privileges—Nay! but because of such privileges, neglected, 'thou shalt be brought down to hades,' i.e., to the invisible or lower world in the sense of desolation.

The meaning is not changed by the A. V., "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven" i.e., raised to the highest privilege of a possible heaven by being the residence of Christ (Matt. IX: 1) and principal scene of His ministry, "thou shalt be brought down to hell" (hades, the abode of the dead) i.e., thou shalt become a dead city, a heap of ruins. The condemnation of this place is typical of the judgment that awaits the people for refusing to repent at the preaching and mighty works of Jesus.

INDIFFERENCE TO CHRIST IS THE SIN OF SINNERS.

Eternal punishment is not merely the penalty of bestial profligacy, of foul sodomy, of active opposition to Christ, or of wilful denial of God, but the consequence of a careless non-acceptance or deliberate rejection of a revelation from God to that individual soul. "The worst sinners are not the doers of the worst things, but the sinners against the clearest light, who know all about Jesus, and care nothing for it all."—*Dr. McLaren*. "The guilt of rejecting the Gospel is marked by Christ as greater than that of moral impurity of life. Neither secular nor sacred history contains a record of immorality and vice more loath-

some and flagrant, than that of the cities of the plain, (Gen XVIII: 20, XIX: 4-13); but Christ pronounces a heavier woes against those that refuse the proffer of the Gospel, because *the refusal to accept help out of sin* is more fatal than any form of immorality, however grievous,"—*Lyman Abbott*. "The worst of heathen, who never heard of a Saviour, nor ever had an offer of Salvation by Him, shall fare better in the day of judgement than those that continue impenitent under the Gospel,"—*Burkitt*. See Jno. III: 18-21, XV: 24. It is clear, that in hell

SOME SINNERS WILL FARE WORSE THAN OTHERS,

and that the only way to avert the doom of eternal punishment, is by repentance, on present opportunity. Sodom will suffer less severe punishment than Capernaum, because of the lesser light of revelation, and yet, if the people had repented under the influences and opportunities they did have, "it would have remained until this day." As with the Sodomites, so with all sinners, the result might be different if they would repent. God's announcements of judgment are not fatalistic decrees that cannot be changed, but warnings to lead to repentance. (Jonah III: 10). The punishment of the wicked, like the destruction of the cities, is not by a necessity in the divine purpose, or by the inevitable operation of natural law, but as the Providential enforcement of a penalty against iniquity (Gen. XVIII: 20, 21, XIX: 13). Dr. Parker says: "This is not arbitrary doctrine. The principle is that no man has the right to reject truth: He has the power to do it, but not the right. We have liberty to go to perdition, but not the right. Man may decline a privilege, he cannot thrust from Him a right without incurring loss in himself and divine punishment from without. We have not the right to reject a truth," and cannot without present and eternal loss.

From this Scripture, it is evident, that

there will be, not only, the endurance of different penalties of suffering in future punishment, in just proportion to the degrees of guilt, which will be determined by relative moral responsibility based upon relative spiritual advantage enjoyed in this life by each individual, but also, that this gradation in suffering is an after-final-judgment experience. Judgment had long ago been executed against Sodom, as a place, but the people are spoken of, as awaiting another and final judgment. The declaration is, 'it shall be more tolerable * * * in the day of judgment,' the future tense refers to Sodom, already judged and destroyed, and not to the upbraided cities. Also, that the decisions of the judgment will turn, not upon what they have done in the intermediate state, but on their experiences, purposes, characters in the present life; and these decisions are

BASED ON A COMPARATIVE JUDGMENT, 'more tolerable * * * than for thee.' All sinners are reserved unto the judgment of the great day (2 Pet. II: 4, Jude 6), to have penalties comparatively awarded according to the deeds done in the body, according to the advantages of personal life. There is here, not the slightest indication of future probation or final restoration, but for every one that 'repented not,' through 'His mighty works,' there was only an awaiting the woe of a judgment to come, and not of another chance for repentance. The kingdom of God was come nigh them and they received it not, the Gospel was preached and they would not hear, they rejected the message, and thus rejected both Him and the Father (1 Thes. IV: 8), there is here no hope for a change in a future state. 'How would I have gathered thee, * and ye would not,' 'ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life.' 'We will not,' says every impenitent. Neither is there any support here, for the idea that eternal punishment is annihilation.

If the issues of final judgment be the annihilation of the wicked, where then is there any chance for degrees of suffering in punishment, as suggested by 'more tolerable than for thee.' There can be no comparative degrees of suffering in annihilation, these can only be in case of continuous existence after 'that great day.'

WOE UNTO THEE, IMPENITENT MAN!

'Howbeit I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.' 'The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it.' See Matt. XII: 40-42, Jno. XV: 22-25, Jas. IV: 17. What more could be done for you than has been done? Wherein have you been neglected? What excuse can you give at judgment that you repented not? Will you then assign any reason why a rejecter of the Gospel should not hear Him say 'depart from Me?' Oh that His upbraiding voice might never fall upon our ears. Oh that upbraiding look! May we never see it when we behold Him on that day. See Jno. XIX: 37, Rev. I: 7.

Matt. XII: 31, 32, and Mk. III: 28-30, most positively assert that there is a sin for which there is absolutely no pardon, not even in this life much less in the future life; 'hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of eternal sin.' R. V. An eternal sin implies

AN ETERNAL SINNER,

and an eternal sinner must certainly imply eternal punishment for that sinner. The devil and his angels are examples of eternal sinners, and human wickedness is represented as becoming in like manner perpetual, and as a consequence, subject to like perpetual punishment.—See Rev. XIV: 9-11, XX: 10. Matt XXV: 41.

This language is most definitely emphatic against any idea of universal salvation or final restoration, as the time included in

which there is no forgiveness covers the whole period of the soul's existence. All other sins are forgivable, but in accordance with God's conditions of forgiveness, and those conditions are restricted to this life. As we have shown, in our sermon on Future Probation, man by wilful, wanton, determined opposition to the work of the Holy Spirit, may put himself beyond the possibility of complying with the conditions; hence as Prof. Wright remarks, 'Probation may practically close before death.' In this instance, the sinner is guilty of deliberate treason against the Holy Spirit; his sin becomes so bodied up with his existence that from it there is no escape. It is the penal consequence of a character given over to hopeless and irredeemable sin. See Jno. III: 19, 1 Jno. V: 16, Rev. XXII: 11.

Any one may now commit this unpardonable sin. Take care that you do not commit 'an eternal sin,' one which, with its consequences, will extend throughout the ages. Is not any sinner who knowingly persists in impenitence against God, until death, guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? You may do it. Will you? Will you reject the light of the Spirit, cut off the influence of the Gospel, and separate yourself from the means of eternal life? Beware lest you become 'an eternal sinner.'

In vs. 33-37 Christ connects 'the unpardonable sin' with the judgment, and shows it to be, not any particular sin, or some specific speaking against the Holy Spirit, but an evil disposition of the nature that leads to blasphemy. He applies the scientific test—

"FOR THE TREE IS KNOWN BY ITS FRUIT," not the fruit by the tree. But the tree is more than the fruit, and the kind of the fruit will be as the nature of the tree; hence, conduct is an expression of character, and it is the character and not the conduct that brings condemnation. *Lit.* 'For out of thy reasoned words (personal

defence) thou shalt be justified, and by thy various points of defence thou shalt be condemned,' 'in the day of judgment.' The acquittal, or the condemnation, in the Messianic judgment, will be based upon 'thy words' or defence, because they are the natural outcome of disposition, the indicators of the heart. It is, therefore, not only the words of the works, as such, that are to be judged, but the true nature, or real inner man, behind them. It is the heart life that fixes the character of the sentence. It is man in his essential essence or nature that is brought to judgment. If the tree is good the fruit will be good, not otherwise. You cannot make the fruit good and thus make the tree good. The corrupt nature must become good, in order that man may become 'the good man,' who, 'out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things' which shall at the last not be condemned.

Remember Christ's words, 'I say unto you, that every idle (insincere, unprofitable, harmful, pernicious) word (expression) that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof (defend it) in the day of judgment.' *Lyman Abbott* says: 'By our words we are writing the history of our lives and preparing the records for the judgment day.' 'Out of thine own mouth,' as the channel of the heart, 'will I judge thee, thou wicked servant.' Luke XIX: 22, see also Job XV: 6.

In the Parable of the Tares (Matt. XIII: 24-30, 36-43.) Christ plainly divides mankind into two, and only two classes, 'the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one.' It is also evident that the parable was spoken to show the final destiny of the wicked 'the tares' 'are gathered up and burned with fire.' The parable teaches the

PUNISHMENT, NOT CONVERSION OF SINNERS

in a future state, and that punishment inflicted for the violation of law, in which

the offender deserves whatever he suffers, not as discipline, but as penalty; 'they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire.' It also shows the sparing mercy of God in this probationary age, (*aión*). 'Let both grow together until the harvest,' that motives of redemption may lead the sinner to repentance. The same gracious influences come to the tares that come to the wheat; hence in the case of the children of the devil and the children of God, the difference in this world (*aión*) is not ineradicable. 'The great gulf' which begins on earth becomes impassable only at death.'—*Abbott*. 'We are not to suppose that the wheat can never become tares, or the tares wheat; this would be to contradict the purpose of Him who willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; and this gracious purpose shines through the Command, 'Let both grow together until the harvest.'—*Alford*.

The parable also teaches that there is a final day, 'the harvest'; a final crisis in human history, 'so shall it be in the end of the world':

AN HOUR OF FINAL SEPARATION

of the wicked from the righteous, 'gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling' * * * Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their 'Father.' The separation is a separation of persons and not of things, and made not for the purpose of punishing or tormenting the wicked, but for the glory of the righteous. The splendor of the life of God's children is hindered or obscured by 'the children of the wicked one,' who are not only 'them that do iniquity,' but all 'that cause stumbling,' i.e., that lead others to sin. The hindering elements being removed, there will be a display of glory in the Messiah's future kingdom, 'then shall the righteous shine forth,' i.e., burst into

light, or display of splendor. (See Col. III: 4; Rom. VIII: 18; Prov. IV: 18, XXV: 4, 5; Dan. XII: 3). Though there is an intermingling of the evil and the good during development, yet there is a separation at maturity which becomes permanent, by a complete and final exclusion of the wicked from the kingdom of heaven. 'Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.' 'As, therefore, the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the end of the world (or age). Note, the final separation is 'in the time of harvest,' and

THE HARVEST IS THE END OF THE WORLD,

i.e., the closing of the age preceding the Messiah's second coming. The harvest is an image of the consummation of the present probational period, and symbolizes the ingathering of God's elect, 'gather the wheat into my barn.' (See Rev. XIV: 15, 16).

From this parable it is evident that Christ believed in a personal devil as His enemy, 'the enemy that sowed them is the devil'; in the personality of evil, 'the tares are the sons of the evil one'; and in a real hell for the wicked, 'shall cast them into the furnace of fire.' That there is a particular locality where God displays His wrath against devils, and the damned of the human family is confirmed by Ps. IX: 17; Matt. V: 30, X: 28, XIII: 50; Mk. IX: 43-48; 2 Pet. II: 4; Rev. XX: 3, 10. 'The tares are gathered and burned in the fire,' to prevent them from spreading and destroying good grain, which was all they were fit for. (Matt. III: 10, VII: 19; Jno. XV: 6). In like manner the punishment of the wicked is not for their correction but to keep unrighteousness from spreading and to prevent iniquity from destroying all the good. *Meyer* calls attention to the fact that *kataitai* not *kat-akaitai* is the word translated 'burned,' and means 'are set on fire.' He says: 'No doubt the tares are consumed by fire (v.

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30); still the point of comparison does not lie in their being consumed, but in the fact of their *being set on fire*—a fact which is intended to illustrate the everlasting punishment now beginning to overtake the wicked in Gehenna. Christ, not only believed in a real hell, but also that it was

"A FURNACE OF FIRE."

Says Trench: "Fearful words indeed [and the image, if it be an image, at all events borrowed from the most dreadful and painful form of death in use among men.] For Scripture references to this cruel mode of punishment, see Gen. XXXVIII: 24; 2 Sam. XII: 31; Jer. XXIX: 22; Dan. III: 6, XI: 33; and 1 Cor. XIII: 3. This method of torture was in vogue in the time of Christ, and has been practised as a means of persecution at different times during the Christian era. This dreadful punishment by fire was not practised by the Jews, yet as the above Scripture quotations prove, they were not unacquainted with that most fearful of all forms of death. It is that form of suffering which is referred to here as the image of the torments of the lost in hell. It was thus employed in the O. T. (2 Sam. XXIII: 6, 7; Is. V: 24, X: 16, 17; Mal. IV: 1). It was also adopted by Christ for the purpose of conveying to the Jewish mind the terrible character of the punishment that awaited the ungodly. (Matt. III: 10, 12, VII: 19, XXV: 41; Mk. IX: 44, Luke XVI: 24, Jno. XV: 6). Elsewhere in the N. T. it is used of the extreme penal torments the wicked are to undergo after judgment. (Heb. VI: 8, X: 26; 27).

Whatever may be the significance of this metaphor, it certainly points to a doom so intolerable that God gave His Only-begotten Son to save man from ever experiencing the real meaning of these terrible words. This may be figurative, but as Whedon says, 'If there be not in the world of retribution a real material fire, yet what fire is to the body

that the element of hell will doubtless be to the soul and to the immortal resurrection body.' Fire, as the symbolic element of eternal suffering, is represented not as something wholly external to the sinner, but as consisting of his sins, and as proceeding from himself. (Is. IX: 18, 19, XXX: 11, 12).

SIN CARRIES ITS REWARD IN ITS OWN BOSOM.

'It is a holy ordinance of God that the wicked by the wicked should lose themselves always the more in wickedness, and thus sin is punished by sin.' Meyer. See 2 Thess. II: 11, 12; Rom. 1: 24, IX: 18. 'Furnace of fire,' may be figurative language, 'but it undoubtedly refers to intolerable suffering, resulting not simply from the circumstances of the evil-doers in a future state, but from their character.—Schaff.

Referring to this parable Lyman Abbott says: "An examination of these passages will make it clear that (a) fire is used in them as a symbol not of purification but of punishment; (b) that it represents a punishment which is a finality, and from which there is and can be no deliverance or restoration; (c) that being borrowed from the most painful form of death in use among men, it stands for a terrible penalty, such as could be interpreted only by a physical symbol; (d) that it is symbolical merely, and to give it a literal interpretation, and found on it a doctrine of physical torture, is wholly to miss the meaning and ignore the usage of Biblical symbolism; (e) that it does not necessarily imply the literal distinction of the sinner, though the chaff, stubble, tares are utterly consumed, for in no other way could a physical symbol interpret spiritual penalty. The first is represented as everlasting and unquenchable (Is. LXVI: 24; MAT. XXV: 41), and it is represented as an instrument, not merely or mainly of destruction, but as one of true penalty, involving suffering, as here in the words, 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth'."

Though *souls* and *spiritual bodies* cannot be

BURNED WITH LITERAL FIRE, yet there will be the endurance of both external and internal suffering by the lost.—Both forms of punishment are represented in this parable; external, which is inflicted upon them from without, "Cast them into the furnace of fire," and internal, which arises from within themselves, "The weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." The external punishment and internal misery will run concurrent and continuously, both will be endured together throughout eternity. There is no describing the pain which sin brings men at the last.—Speaking on the expressions used by scripture to set forth the sufferings of the lost, *South* says: "But what are all these but shadows! mere similitudes, and not things! Fire no more represents God's wrath, than the picture of fire itself represents its heat." *John Locke* says: "Everything within themselves, and everything externally to themselves will produce the utmost torture that their natures are capable of sustaining."

Evidently, Christ not only believed in a 'hell of fire', i.e., a place of actual external torment, but in the endurance of

POSITIVE INTERNAL SUFFERING.

by the lost, which He described as "the weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."—This is an oft repeated expression of Christ's (see v. 50 of this chap. and chaps. VIII : 12, XXII : 13, XXIV : 51, XXV : 30, also Luke XIII : 28,) which, taken with the article, ignored in A. V., shows it to have been a quotation or well known figure indicating the abiding misery of infernal punishment.

The Cambridge Bible says, the expression means "that wailing and gnashing of teeth, which you speak of." It not only indicates suffering, but anguish and rage (Acts VII : 54), a punishment that is positively felt, not negatively endured. *Klauthmos* means audible "weeping or

wailing" as a sign of pain and grief felt, i.e., weeping because of the intense pain and grief endured. *Brugmos* means a 'gnashing of the teeth' as in rage, but here with *on odonton addid*, denotes extreme anguish and utter despair. *Darwin* says in *Expression of the Emotions* "the grinding of the teeth and the uttering of piercing shrieks give relief in an agony of pain." The figure indicates not only an intensity of suffering, but a suffering accompanied with despair. The scripture no where represents that those who are wicked here, will be happy hereafter, but on the contrary, the very reverse. In the picture before us, there is not only the separation of the wicked from the righteous and their complete exclusion from heaven, but their follows the exclusion, a special suffering that evidences a sense of

INTOLERABLE PAIN AND UNUTTERABLE

LOSS.

The punishments of the wicked which arise from within themselves must, to an intellectual creature like man, be more terrible to endure than any punishment from without. A continual sense of sin, constant anguish of mind, an abiding remorse of conscience, eternal envy, malice and revenge in the heart, and everlasting despair of the soul, will form the characteristics of eternal punishment. These are represented by the terms, 'blackness and darkness'; 'the worm that dieth not,' 'the weeping and wailing and the gnashing of teeth.' As the spiritual is the superior part of man, so the punishment which the soul will have to endure, must necessarily be of the most intense character. In the expression under consideration there is implied not only the endurance of pain but the suffering from loss of what might have been gained, without remedy or limitation. If the sinner felt that his suffering was merely an arbitrary infliction from the hand of God, or a merciless determination of an angry Jehovah, then he might have

some consolation in his lot ; not so however, his torments are self-inflicted,

THE UNQUENCHABLE FIRE OF SELF-REPROACH

will "heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated." The unceasing desire of the soul to rise higher and an ever-longing anxiety to exercise all its powers, in a state in which neither can be realized, will produce no other feeling than misery. When the lost soul realizes that every attempt towards happiness is absolute failure, and when, with the ceaseless exercise of unhappy thoughts, there is always coupled the feeling, "it might have been different," "I have only myself to blame," the misery becomes intensified beyond description. This will indeed cause "the weeping or wailing and the gnashing of teeth." The punishment described under this figure is not mere remorse or compunction of conscience. If remorse of conscience be the punishment for sin then the more man sins the less he is punished, and going to hell would deliver him entirely. Experience in sin shows that remorse diminishes as crime increases, and that the effect of sin is to harden, and finally, absolutely to destroy the conscience. The description is that of the internal pangs of a conscienceless man.

The parable of the seine or drag-net, vs. 47-50, characterized by Chrysostom as

"A TERRIBLE PARABLE,"

is not a mere repetition of the parable of the tares. The "tares" showed the hindrances in the kingdom of Christ by the present intermixture of the bad with the good. And that the bad originated from the evil one. The "drag-net" showed the final consummation of Christ's work 'at the end of the world or age,' and the final separation that will take place in the whole human race, at the judgment, 'sever the wicked from among the righteous.' The points of view of the two parables are different; the former is the

earthly or development form of the kingdom, the latter the perfect or completed form. The stress in both lies on the clear distinction between the evil and the good, but while the destiny of the righteous is passed over lightly, the fate of the wicked is emphasized. They are parables of warning, and as Gregory the Great says 'rather to be trembled at than expounded.' Into the sea of time, the Gospel net is cast and gathers humanity 'of every kind (*genos, species*)' to the shore of eternity, when the angels, who accompany Christ at judgment, (Matt. XXV: 31), will separate the good, (*kala*, pleasing, beautiful, i.e., excellent in nature and characteristics, and therefore well adapted to its ends, applied to things which answer the purpose for which they were created), from the bad (*sapra*, putrid, unfit for use). The good (useful) are 'gathered into vessels, but the bad (useless) they cast away.' (See enumeration of vessels in Matt. XIII: 30; Jno. XIV: 2; Luke XVI: 9; Heb. XI: 10, 12, 22; Rev. III: 12. Also Jno. VI: 37, XII: 31. XV: 9; Mk. IV: 11; Col. IV: 5, as examples of the line of separation drawn between the righteous and unrighteous). As above shown,

USEFUL AND USELESS

in the kingdom of heaven is the ground of distinction in the final separation. Other parables had illustrated the power of the Gospel to change the bad or *useless* to the good or *useful*, but this shows the fact that those who remain useless, because of the perversity of their own will, must of necessity be 'cast away.' Herein is depicted no hope for future annihilation or final restoration, but a fixed condition of suffering after 'the end.' The very fact, that the wicked have mingled with the righteous and enjoyed equal privileges with them, will but add to their eternal anguish and misery. Being in the net was nothing, moral purity and spiritual usefulness are the characteristics which ensure being gathered into

God's vessels in that great day. 'The angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them &c,' as in v. 42. This awful description of God's final cleansing of His kingdom from all evil, fell from the loving lips of His only begotten Son.

Observe, 'so shall it be at the end of the world,' or present dispensation, as in v. 40. The end of time is but the beginning of eternity; the *æon* or age shall be ended, not so with man, he will live on, but it will be an after-judgment life, a separated life, evil with evil, and good with good.

THE SEPARATORS ARE THE ANGELS, not men (vs. 39 and 41; Matt. XVI: 27, XXIV: 31; 2 Thess. I: 7; Rev. XIX: 14), the good does not finally expel the bad, but angelic eyes shall discriminate between them and deliberately 'sever the wicked from among the righteous.' The tares may be concealed in the wheat and the bad hidden by the good, but each kind is made known and an actual separation takes place; 'so shall it be at the end of the world,' character will be revealed and judged, and a separation, infallible and absolute, final and irreversible, take place. It will then be found that 'they are not all Israel who are of Israel,' but that 'the Lord knoweth them that are His.'

Nominal Christian or formal professor, do you grasp the reality of final judgment? Do you realize that we must be participators in its solemn and awful scenes? Oh, there will be a separation "in the last day." What shall it be? Christ regarded hell as a dreadful reality and used the most forcible figures of pain and penalty to symbolise the spiritual torments of the lost. Whatever may be the state that in any way corresponds to His description, it must be fearful in the extreme. I pray you do not lose sight of the facts, that the lost might have been saved. Christ bled for them, wept over

them and would have saved them, but they would not. The anguish ('weeping or wailing') and rage ('gnashing of teeth') of the sinner, will not be against God or His church but against himself, because of the self-inflicted loss. 'Why will ye die, O house of Israel?'

THE PARABLE OF THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT.

Matt. xviii; 23-35, illustrates the duty, nature and motive of forgiveness. Peter was anxious to know the principle of forgiveness, not in the eternal World, but in the present Kingdom of grace, which Christ by this parable showed to be like the forgiveness we need from God, *without limitation*. The code of His Kingdom is that he who needs pardon, must be willing to grant absolute pardon. It is a Kingdom of unlimited forgiveness, founded upon the forgiveness of God, "therefore" neither the unforgiven nor the unforgiving can abide in it.

Dr. Joseph Parker has the following homiletic note on this parable. "1—The Kingdom of Heaven recognises individual responsibility.—'a certain King, which would make a reckoning with his servants;' 2—is a Kingdom of justice,—his lord commanded him to be sold, &c., 3—is a Kingdom of mercy.—'the lord of that servant was moved with compassion;' 4—The Kingdom of heaven teaches that he who has been forgiven should forgive,—'Thou wicked servant, * * * shouldst not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee?;' 5—'That having failed in mercy will have recourse to absolute justice,—'his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due.'"

The "reckoning with his servants," does not refer to the final judgment as in Matt. xxv: 19; 2. Cor. v: 10, nor to the closing of our earthly stewardship as in Luke xvi: 2. But rather to the "settling accounts," had with "all the world" when all were found "under the judgment (condemnation) of God," "for all have sinned,"

Rom. iii: 19, 23, E. V., also Jno. iii: 18, Rom. ii, 2, Gal. iv: 10, or to the "reckoning," which God holds with individuals at various times in life by various means to bring them to a consciousness of sin. Otherwise the unmerciful servant had no opportunity to exercise either forgiveness or non-forgiveness toward his fellows. The above fact taken in connection with Peter's question and Christ's answer, vs. 21, 22, shows that the application of the parable is to the spirit of forgiveness which we should exercise toward a brother sinning against us, in this life, i. e. to our conduct in "the Kingdom of heaven," which Christ is now setting up in this world, and not to some after-death forgiveness or restoration possibilities.—Christ here and elsewhere compares sin to a debt which the debtor is unable to pay, whether the sin be great or small, "forasmuch as he had not wherewith to pay." (See Luke xvii: 41, 42, also Matt. v: 26)

This servant was a complete bankrupt, he was to be sold out absolutely. In like manner, every sinner is a hopeless debtor, "sold under sin" (Rom. vii: 14; 1. Kgs. xxi: 20, 25), from which we may be ransomed, not by the

PENAL SUFFERING OF SINNER OR SAVIOUR, but by the forgiveness of God in Christ Jesus (Luke: 74, 75; Rom. vi: 17, 18.) Verse 26 represents the servant as acknowledging his indebtedness (confesses sin), and as expressing the desire to make all right (repentance toward God). The earnestness and sincerity of his penitence is expressed by the imperfect tense of "worshipped" denoting repetition of act or persistence in action. *Ederheim* says, "This bit of history from real life points the lesson, that a man's strict desert before God is utter, hopeless, and eternal ruin and loss." The parable is a picture of Oriental despotism, under which an insolvent debtor is utterly at the mercy of his creditor, and could be arbitrarily and completely 'sold out' both himself and family be sold into perpetual bondage, thus being placed beyond

all opportunities of paying the debt. This custom seems at one time to have prevailed under Jewish law, but with this difference, a release came in the year of jubilee, to the servant, however, there is no promise of future liberation, he clearly personates the eternal punishment of the wicked. (See Lev. xxv: 39, 41; Ex. xxi: 22, 2 Kgs. iv: 1; Neh. v: 7, 8; Is. L: 1; Amos ii: 6, viii, 6). Every sinner, like the servant, is amenable to the law of right, and justice demands "payment to be made." Though the sale of the bankrupt's effects and family does not clear the debt, yet the creditor has the right to enforce his claim to the utmost extent. In like manner the enforcement of the "eternal death" penalty against the sinner is no

COMPENSATION TO GOD FOR THE DEBT OF SIN.

Punishment is not payment for the guilt of our failure to discharge our duty to God and man, nor for our wilful transgressions of divine and human laws, but is simply the voice of divine justice speaking in terrible tones against the enormity of sin. The magnitude of sin is represented in the parable by the almost incalculable debt of ten thousand talents variously estimated at from \$12,000,000, to \$16,000,000, an amount utterly impossible of payment. The idea is not to represent the guilt of particular sinful acts, but rather that the natural man whether his debt be represented by "ten thousand talents," or "an hundred pence," by "five hundred pence or fifty," is an insolvent debtor and has nothing with which to pay, i. e., to make himself right with God. We should not allow the representation of sin as debt to betray us into regarding sin by mathematical calculation, either in the abstract or in the concrete. Debt is a failure to discharge an obligation or duty, or is that which one person owes to another for service rendered, and when applied to sin implies the personal

lity not only of the debtor but the creditor. This idea of debt as applied to sin, includes

FAILURES AS WELL AS WRONG-DOINGS,

"sins of omission" and "sins of commission." When we lay our lives along side the obligations of the Moral law, and measure up to the duty of love to God and neighbor, then the best of us will find an undischarged debt of such magnitude that we can never pay it. But when we remember our relation to God, His love to us and all that He has done for us, that our motives have not been for the glory of God, that our lives have been an indifference to divine love, and that every sin is against the nature and throne of God and eternal in its consequences, it is then that we will realize that we cannot pay the debt of sin. In this parable there stands over against the enormous debt of sin, in striking contrast, the mercy of God manifested in the *complete forgiveness of the sinner*. This debtor thinks "if he only has a chance he can wipe out this debt," have patience with me and I will pay thee all." He attempts "justification by works." So men oft times think to pay off the debt of sin by righteous acts, but our not going further into debt, (sin) never paid past accumulations. He acknowledged the justice of the claim and cried for mercy, but acknowledgements of debt, (sin) and promises to pay (to be better) never cancelled an obligation. "We can never atone for our sins. The debt of sin is not only hopelessly great, but hopelessly irremovable." *Westminster Teacher*. Observe, that in this contrast, that which stands out most prominently, is that God is not set on the punishment of the sinner, but rather upon the forgiveness of his sins. It is not compensation for wrong doing that He seeks, but

RECONCILIATION OF THE WRONG-DOER.

The servant's cry for respite and promise to clear the debt, was taken as a willing desire to be right with his "lord,"

who, "being moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt." Notice the answer is unconditional, free and complete, and surpassing the request. It was perfect remission, full pardon, absolute forgiveness. Also notice, it was through the King's compassion that the whole debt was unconditionally remitted and the servant let go free. This is beyond question a picture of divine compassion forgiving the sins of the sinner, who truly desires the pardon of past sins and heart-rightness with God.

Christ evidently designs to teach by means of this parable, the principle, not only of divine and human forgiveness in His Kingdom, but also the fearful condemnation awaiting an unforgiving and unforgiven soul. This latter is presented not as a principle in the divine government, but as a consequence of human action. We have already seen that either the original debt of sin, or the indebtedness of personal transgressions, no matter when the reckoning takes place or however small the accumulations of sin, becomes an account, forever beyond the possibility of human payment. (Ps. XL : 12)—Therefore the SINNERS ONLY HOPE IS IN A FORGIVENESS, granted gratuitously by God, the Father. This full, free, unconditional pardon or remission of the debt, is the essence of the principle of the divine forgiveness as herein taught by Christ; and also the principle upon which human forgiveness should proceed. God always anticipates human needs and makes full provision for human wants, but our enjoyment of these provisions is entirely contingent upon our right seeking and true acceptance of them. The action of the king showed that he was both willing and desirous to forgive the servant's debt, upon the simple condition that the servant was truly anxious to pay his master in full. In like manner forgiveness is ready for us, and God is willing to grant it. And He will, the moment we really desire

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it, i. e., earnestly repent (confess our sins and wish them blotted out from the heart and life, and long to be right with God,) and do truly receive it, i. e., exercise faith in Christ (faith is thankfully accepting the gifts of our Father's love). Forgiveness is not according to man's deservings but according to the fulness of divine love and God's boundless grace. Hence on the gospel faith-principle, the repentant sinner's duty is to put forth the hand of faith and take the blessing already prepared for him—then

GOD GRANTS A FULL FORGIVENESS.

The sinner needs not bargain with the Lord or wait for the consideration of his case, but having repented, he simply accepts forgiveness—his obligation is remitted, his offence put away and his past wrong forgiven. He is regarded by God as if innocent i. e., as if never having had any wrong feeling or desire, and never having done a wrong thing—See Luke vii : 42. *Lit.*

"When they were unable (had it not in their power) to pay, he freely forgave (remitted by free grace and favor) them both."

A pivotal principle in a sinner's pardon, on the human side, is the duty of forgiveness, in fact, our very salvation is made to depend upon it.

THE UNQUALIFIED CONDITION OF OUR BEING FORGIVEN

is "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses," (Matt. vi : 14, 15.) This is Christ's elucidation of 'And forgive us our debts, as (in the manner in which) we also have forgiven our debtors.' The Lord's prayer assumes that we have forgiven and continue to exercise the spirit of forgiveness, when we ask God to forgive us; this is indicated by the scribe of *aphekameh*, "have forgiven," showing that he who is wronged has ab-

solutely put away the wrong so that the wrong-doer is entirely released from its burden—(See Matt. v : 23, 24). "He that cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself; for every man has need to be forgiven." —*Lord Herbert*. The parent's heart is ready to forgive a child, but cannot, in justice to either himself or child, grant pardon until the child seeks in a spirit that harmonises with the parent's, and desires to forgive and be forgiven. So with God and the sinner, the heavenly Father's action is contingent upon his desires, and upon the state of his heart. Upon the part of the offended

FORGIVENESS IS A MENTAL ATTITUDE toward the offender, but as a completed act it must be accepted in a right spirit by said offender; hence the wronged one may exercise the loving spirit of forgiveness and the wrong doer not enjoy the fact of forgiveness. Forgiveness is a part but not the whole of salvation. It is the gateway not to a property possession or eternal location, but to a state of being and privilege of grace. Its enjoyment however is entirely dependent upon exercising a forgiving spirit and accepting and continuing in God's forgiving love.

These thoughts prepare the way for the consideration of the second reckoning with this servant. An important question arises, to what does 'released him, and forgave him the debt (loan)' refer? Does it refer to that forgiveness of the race through Christ Jesus, whereby all born into the world are guiltless? (Rom. v : 16, 18). Or to that remission of personal sins which is granted any sinner upon exercising repentance and faith? (Rom. vii : 24 25). Perhaps to both, though the parable is generally interpreted as referring to the latter, thus placing the servant in the position of a "backslider."

Some there are, who regard the servant as representing forgiven men, who though having professedly accepted forgive-

new yet continue in the manifestation of an unforgiving spirit. I can understand how divine forgiveness may be forfeited by persistent backsliding or wilful refusal, but cannot understand a person experiencing God's forgiveness without exercising human forgiveness. It seems to me that Christ's teaching is that an unforgiving spirit is an unforgiven spirit; therefore the forgiveness of the servant's debt must refer to the unconditional offer of free salvation to every individual of the race. The servant was a *professor* but not a *possessor* of "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father." God's spirit and offer of forgiveness runs parallel with our earthly existence and is not an isolated act; therefore our lives should be lives of continual forgiveness. The lesson specially taught is that

FORGIVENESS CANNOT BE FORGIVENESS, until both parties to the transaction are of the same forgiving spirit. It is a standing rebuke against that form of Pharisaism which believes a man is forgiven of God, because he believes he is forgiven. For God to grant forgiveness to an unrepentant sinner, would be contrary to the divine restoration-principle of the plan of salvation. (Rom. viii : 29). God shows, by the parable, that He is in the constant exercise of a forgiving spirit toward every sinner, but that he who refuses to exercise the same spirit really refuses to accept forgiveness, and therefore cannot enter into His Kingdom. 'As certainly as there is no Kingdom of God without the forgiveness which we receive, so certainly there is no Kingdom of God without the forgiveness which we bestow.' — *Draseke*. One leading truth must be kept in mind, that this servant lost the benefit of forgiveness, because he refused to exercise the spirit of forgiveness. He did not truly forgive, because he had not truly repented, thus

HE MAKES FORGIVENESS INOPERATIVE.

Annot says, 'He has not been converted;

he has only been frightened.' Notice, 'that servant went out' voluntarily, was not cast out, (John xv : 46), because he was not in harmony with and of the same spirit as his lord, and sought an opportunity for exercising his own merciless spirit. His conduct was governed by strict justice rather than loving mercy. He thereby replaces himself in the relation of unyielding justice to his own debt, rather than under the principle of loving mercy. (Matt. vii : 2, 12; Mk. iv : 24). Christ herein shows that the evidence of divine forgiveness to us, is the exercise of human forgiveness by us. If, as this servant does, a man prove that a forgiveness has been given him by God which he has not accepted, then he remains as if no forgiveness had been granted. Pardon proclaimed by the Heavenly Father, but not received in spirit by the sinning child, is null and void. The unmerciful servant did not acknowledge that his fellow-servant's debt was his own asset and as such belonged to the king (his creditor), and when his lord 'released him, and forgave him the debt' he should have regarded that asset, as a liability of his fellow-servant to the king and left the settlement with them. His demand for the hundred pence was as if made against the king himself, but when he demands the settlement of his claim upon the standard of justice and ignores the proposal of mercy, he refused forgiveness in its spirit and intention.

HIS OWN WILFUL ACT

and not the king's arbitrary decree, placed the servant in the same relation to his lord as if no pardon had been offered. So with the sinner, when God offers to cancel his sins, He includes the sin of an unforgiving spirit toward his fellows. And if the sinner conditionally pardoned, refuse to exercise the condition of mercy toward others, but chooses justice instead, he thereby shuts himself out from the sphere of proffered grace and renders di-

vine forgiveness impossible. *He excludes himself from the kingdom of Heaven* by non-acceptance of the terms, or by violating them after having once accepted. Note further, the consequence of such forfeiture of pardon. It is not a mere exclusion, (a leaving of the debt standing), but an actual enforcement of law upon the principles of strict justice without any regard to mercy. The unforgiving debtor is summoned into the presence of his merciful creditor and a final reckoning had. The basis of reckoning this time however, was not upon the debt, but upon the spirit he had manifested. God does not forgive sin to save us from hell, but to develop within us the divine spirit, by bringing us into personal relation with Himself, thus placing

US ON GOD'S OWN MORAL LEVEL.

(Eph. i: 5; Jno. xvii: 22). The servant is now treated not as a debtor, but as a criminal, 'Thou wicked servant'; wicked (criminal) because of the unmerciful spirit manifested. The ground upon which Christ bases our duty of forgiveness is, 'I forgave thee all that debt, because thou besoughtest me; shouldest not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee?' (Matt. vi: 12, R. V). 'The guilt which he (the servant) is charged with is, not that needing mercy he refused to show it, but that *having received mercy* he remains unmerciful still (Comp. I Jno. iv: 11).'-Trench. To that burning question, 'shouldest not thou also had mercy,' he had no answer. What could he say? The king now ceases to be a creditor and becomes a judge; he is no longer 'moved with compassion,' but 'was wroth,' i. e., was provoked to manifest his opposition to the servant's disobedience and obduracy by punishing the same. This time, the servant makes no plea, not even expressing a desire of payment, and to the king as judge is left no other possible course than enforcement of the former sentence, v. 25,

'and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due.' In like manner, God has shown mercy to us in putting away the sins of the world, by Christ Jesus, but if we appreciate not that mercy and do not appropriate that forgiveness, What! Is there anything awaiting us but the coming of the Messianic judgment, our hopeless condemnation, and final deliverance to the tormentors (torturers) in Gehenna? There is nothing here that sounds like future probation.

HOW LONG WILL THE PUNISHMENT LAST, which now takes the place of proclaimed pardon? The parable answers, 'till he should pay all that was due.' In v. 25, he is declared a bankrupt, 'forasmuch as he has not wherewith to pay,' therefore he must lie in prison, on the merciless rack of the tormentors, until with nothing, he pay \$15,000,000, which certainly meant endless imprisonment and ceaseless torture. It is true, that 'till he should pay all that was due' marks a limit of time when the punishment may end, and if a possibility of payment was implied the end might come. But how can a prisoner earn this money? Or if 'he has not', how can the inquisitor's rack compel the revealing of concealed hoards or wring the money from compassionate friends? Trench says, 'the phrase is proverbial, and all which it signifies is, that the offender shall now taste of the extreme rigor of the law; shall have justice without mercy; and always paying, shall yet never have paid off his debt.' As applied to the sinner who has refused or rejected reconciliation with God, and thus made his sin worse than the original debt, it must mean

PERPETUAL SUFFERING IN ETERNAL IMPRISONMENT.

The torturing 'till he should pay all', certainly implies a conscious existence in the eternal prison and is therefore opposed to restoration and annihilation theories.—Abbott

says, 'This certainly does not imply, it rather negatives, the idea of future restoration. It teaches the finality of the last judgment, and the hopelessness of a future restoration for those who, by their conduct in this life, have cast away God's mercy.' 'This condition, for the sinner (i. e., payment of his debt to God), is the strongest possible way of expressing the everlasting duration of his punishment.'—*Trench*. 'Until thou payest * * * I must believe that He is alluding to the punishment which is called eternal.'—*Augustine*. 'That' is to say perpetually, for he will never pay it off.—*Chrysostom*. *Plumptre* sees in these 'tormentors,' 'whatever suffering lies beyond the grave.' 'The language of the parable seems to proceed on these two assumptions; that suffering neither expiates guilt, nor in itself amends the guilty; and that as sin has incurred a debt which can never be discharged, so the banishment, or rather the loss and misery of it will be endless.'—*Edersheim*. This ought to be settled by

CHRIST'S WARNING APPLICATION.

'So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts.' All this is in harmony with divine love. To forgive the incorrigible would be to make him worse rather than better. The unrepentant, for the safety of the world, must be punished. Forgiving others is not the ground but the test of our forgiveness. 'He who does not forgive, shuts with his own hands the gate of divine mercy against himself.'—*Augustine*. But forgiveness must be 'from your hearts' and not a mere affair of the lips. God helps us all! May we each be able to repeat the Lord's 'Prayer sincerely, in spirit and in truth, with emphasis on 'as we have forgiven.'

R. V.

The selfishness of human nature prevents us getting a clear insight into the essence of sin. Many there are whose

conception of sin centres upon their personal relation to God. When the question 'Where is thy brother?' is pressed home they reply, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' Men have not learned that God, the Father, identifies himself with man, the child, that wrong against the child is sin against the Father, and that we are condemned not only for our own personal sins but for tempting others to sin. Christ taught in Matt. XVIII: 6-9; Mk. IX: 42-48; Luke, XVII: 1-2; that 'who so shall offend (cause to stumble) one of these little ones, does thereby reject Him. In Christ's estimation;

DEATH IS BETTER THAN LIFE

to one that is sinning or that is causing others to sin, even death by that swift and terrible method of capital punishment practised by Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. 'It is better (profitable) for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.' *Meyer* thinks that 'punishment of death to which the man in question has become liable, is intended to represent the loss of eternal life.' This is without doubt correct, from what follows in vs. 8, 9. Christ certainly did not mean that death, as a means of annihilation or final restoration, was a better thing than life to a sinner, but rather than become a tempter to, or seducer of others to evil and thus become a *soul-murderer*, it is infinitely better to die the most ignoble death. The idea is, do not sin or entice others to sin, it is better to die shamefully than to do either. Nor does it lessen the responsibility because temptations are unavoidable, as human life is now constituted in this world. It may be true as some assert, 'that the sea of temptation is infinite', yet Christ does not pronounce the woe against the individual who does not 'strengthen his bark of self-reliance that he might be enabled to resist triumphantly,' but against

"THAT MAN BY WHOM THE TEMPTATION
COMETH."

Yea! 'that man'. In Luke, He says, 'It is impossible but that occasions of stumbling should come; but woe unto him, through whom they come!' Christ made the same application of this principle to His own betrayal, Matt XXVI: 24, 'The Son of Man goeth, even as it is written of Him: but woe unto that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had not been born.' (Also Mk. XIV: 21, Luke XXII: 22.) It was necessary that Christ should give His life by the shedding of blood for the remission of man's sins, but that does not exonerate the traitor. God overrules the sins and plans of man and uses them to accomplish His own purposes, but this makes neither the sin nor the sinner necessary or guiltless. Because man's plans cannot thwart God's, but may work 'rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel,' it does not lessen the guilt of the man who from free choice has done the wrong act. God's foreknowledge or predetermined plan cannot affect the responsibility of a free agent; his acts are his own, unforced and deliberate, and if sinful in themselves or their consequences he must justly be punished for them. Hence Christ said of His betrayer,

"WOE UNTO THAT MAN."

It was not the pronouncement of a threatening, but the sad statement of a terrible fact, from a loving, broken heart who felt more the consequence to Judas than to Himself. 'Judas was not a traitor because God foresaw it; but God foresaw it because Judas would be so.'—*Chrysostom*. 'Offences and crimes must come, not because God has ordained them, but because in the nature of sin they cannot but come, as fruit must come of a tree; but woe to the man who deliberately plans and hastens these wicked works.'—*Pentecost*. The public may demand or permit an iniquitous business—liquor-selling for instance;

but it will not make it less wicked for the upholder to say 'It had to be done,' or 'It would be done.' A terrible woe awaits all such.

The day came when Judas himself felt the coming woe, not that Jesus took summary vengeance upon him, but when he saw the consequences of his own act; even the chief priests themselves recognized his criminality. See Matt. XXVII: 3—10. Christ's pity, not his wrath, announced the 'woe,' i. e., the final lot of the traitor. Jesus saw the black gulf of horror that was yawning before Judas' feet, and in compassion spoke words of warning that ought to have moved him to repentance. God always looks upon sin with anger, but never looks upon the sinner without loving pity. That does not excuse the wilful sinner, nor save the man who dies in his sins, from the consequence of a sinful life.

"GOOD WERE IT FOR THAT MAN IF HE HAD
NOT BEEN BORN."

Evidently Christ saw an eternal woe resting over the head of the doomed man. He means that non-existence is to be preferred to the eternity of such, but that the only means of non-existence is never to come into being. He does not say 'good were it for that man if he were dead,' but 'if he had not been born,' i. e., had not existed at all. There is no encouragement here for Future Probation, Annihilation, or Final Restoration. It is not a woe to be born a sinner under the present plan of salvation, for through the new birth our sinful nature may be made holy and our lives blessed; but if we refuse to be 'born again' and prefer sin to forgiveness then our existence becomes an everlasting woe.

'Observe the incidental confirmation of the doctrine elsewhere taught, that for the finally lost soul there is no redemption. It could not with truth be said of one, It had been good for that man if he had not been born, if the tem-

port by punishment of his sin was to be followed by his final redemption, and his glorious realization at last of the image of God."—Abbott. 'And so it is impossible that he can ever be restored to Divine favor. For if after millions of years he ascends to an eternity of happiness, he is a clear gainer in the balance of existence.'—Whedon. 'This is often urged as one of the most cogent arguments in proof of the eternity of future punishments, because, however they might be prolonged, if they were ever to have an end, such an existence would still be preferable to nonentity.'—Alexander. As man's will, not God's sovereignty, is the cause,

SOYE TEMPTER AND BETRAFER ARE RESPONSIBLE

for the consequences of their acts and, guilty of the most awful sins. Sinning is weakness, but tempting is devilish. It is a fiend's business to lead others into sin; it is the devil's work. In Matt. XVIII: 7, the 'woe unto the world' and 'woe unto that man' are both spoken in sorrow, the former in view of the evil which will result to the world, and the latter in view of the heavy penalty that will fall upon the offender. This penalty will come upon every man who puts evil within the reach of men; not that he compels men to do evil, but that he provides the means for sinning, or induces them to sin. The devil never forced a man to evil. What more devilish thing can be done than to wreck an immortal soul? Shall not the man therefore, who is guilty of such a heinous crime, suffer a penalty as equally guilty with devils? This was the woe that Christ saw awaiting all intentional tempters, hence the warning advice of vs. 8-9. He so understood human nature, that He knew that before we can become a cause of temptation to others there must be a source of temptation in ourselves and to ourselves; in other words a man must have fallen before he will lead others to fall. Therefore, lest we should commit

the double sin of ourselves falling and causing others to fall,

OUT OFF, PLUCK OUT, CAST AWAY

the most innocent pleasure or the most useful exercise, if its use be an occasion of stumbling to yourself or others. (For a fuller consideration see on Matt. V: 29-32, pages 14, 15). This terrible warning is spoken in love. It is love's danger signal. He makes the light as bright as possible, and rings the alarm as loudly as in His power, when he announces the final doom; 'to be cast into a hell of fire,' 'to be cast into eternal fire.' Christ realized the consequences of sin to be eternal and the punishment for sin terrible and everlasting. Better to forego the brief pleasures of sin in the present life, than to lose the eternal pleasures of heaven in the life to come, taught Jesus. Upon this principle Moses acted. (Heb. XI: 24-26.)

Mark gives a more emphatic description of the 'woe' awaiting the lost sinner in the thrice repeated 'to be cast into hell (Gehenna),' 'where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.' It is a quotation from Is. LXVI: 24 and applied to transgressors. Gehenna or the valley of Hinnom was used as the Jewish representation of the place of future punishment. The fires in the literal Gehenna might be temporary because of want of fuel, but 'hell fire' 'never shall be quenched,' it is 'the unquenchable fire.' So also worms die when the carcasses are consumed, but of the wicked 'their worm dieth not.' Notice the difference in the expressions.

"THEIR WORK" AND "THE FIRE,"

the one refers to punishment that will arise from their own nature, the special agonies of suffering; the other to sufferings inflicted from without, the general description of the place. 'Their worm dieth not,' refers to the punishment that they will feel within themselves. The 'worm' of remorse will prey upon the soul with bitter reflections of what it

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might have been; thoughts of happiness lost and of misery justly incurred. 'Dieth not' *diff.* 'comes not to an end,' a never ending internal torment, inseparable from man's thought and memory. 'Son remember' that thou mightest have been graciously saved, but are now righteously punished, because of thy contempt of the Father's love, because of thy rejection of the Son's sacrifice, and because of thy resistance of the Spirit's strivings. The inward passions of envy, hatred, shame, rage, malice, revenge, and despair shall be an undying worm that will for ever aggravate the misery of the lost soul. 'The fire is not quenched,' refers to the outward torture that will be inflicted in the prison-house of hell. A direct and specific torment is here implied as completing the misery of the lost. 'The unquenchable fire,' as in contrast with the flames of Hinnom that may be quenched, symbolizes a suffering from which there would and could be no deliverance.

A COMPLETE DESTRUCTION of spiritual life, not annihilation of spirit existence, after which there can be no restoration.

Whose imagination can picture the woe and wretchedness of an immortal, intelligent being, totally miserable in itself and all its relations and associations forever. Such a state of unmixed woe and complete misery is that described by the lips of Infinite Love. 'Take heed how ye hear.'

The parable of The Wicked Husbandmen, Matt. XXI: 33-45; Mark XII: 1-12; Luke XX: 9-19, teaches national accountability to God, and shows that Godless and unfaithful nations shall be punished. In the parable of the Laborers, (Matt. XX: 1-16) individual responsibility is set forth in the call to Christian work. 'Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you.' And in the parable of the Two Sons, (Matt. XXI: 28-32) is illus-

trated that the

TEST OF PIETY IS PRACTICE, NOT PROFESSION.

Jesus' parables had hitherto been compassionate and merciful, designed to arouse the conscience and lead to repentance; but now they become condemning, designed to convince of personal guilt and prepare for judgment. Like Nathan, He compels them to convict themselves and pronounce sentence, but unlike David they did not repent and therefore could not be forgiven. 'The publicans and harlots (flagrant sinners) who, afterwards repented themselves (regretted it) and went, are now going into the kingdom of God before you (orthodox moralists), who said, I go, Sir, and went not; did not even repent (regretted not) yourselves afterwards in order that ye might believe.'

'But what think ye? A man had two sons. Here, as in Luke XV: 11, the human race is divided into two great moral divisions of men, sons of one father. Both are sons, as a father God cares for both and both may enter into His kingdom. 'Whether of the twain did the will of his father?' Then whether of the twain will enter into the kingdom? 'The first.' Why? Because

GOD IS A RESPECTER OF CHARACTER, not of persons. (See Deu. X: 17; 2 Chr. XIX: 7; Job XXXIV: 19; Acts X: 34-35; Rom. II: 11; Gal. II: 6 Col. III: 5; 1 Pet. 1: 17). The only acceptable excuse that can be given for not being at work in the Father's vineyard, is, no opportunity for labor.—'Because no man hath hired us.' But God is continually going forth to all men and saying, 'Go ye also into the vineyard.' There is only one answer to 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' We shall have to give an account for all idling; all who are not working in the vineyard are idlers. Each should go to work at the first call, as there is no promise or hope of eternal life given to those who reject the Gospel until their death-bed, except it

can be truly said 'no man hath hired us.' Heaven is not the mere reward of work done, neither is hell just the punishment of sins committed, but both are the results of a life lived, the character formed. Quality, not quantity, of work was the principle of the payment of wages to the laborers in the vineyard. 'Not, how much hast thou done? but, what art thou now? will be the great question of the last day.'—*Trench*. Righteous manhood, not mechanical service, is God's purpose in salvation. National accountability grows out of individual responsibility, as these three parables show. They also show that judgment comes to each,—to the nation in time, to the individual in eternity—that the unfaithful nation will now be destroyed and the individual be doomed to eternal punishment. 'The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you,

* * * * will scatter him as dust.' Mark you, in Matt XXI : 33—44,

THE SELF-PRONOUNCED SENTENCE,

('He will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons') is not enforced until loving mercy and divine compassion are exhausted upon the lost child who has filled the cup of his iniquity. It is not because God rejects the sinner that he is finally lost to His kingdom, but because the sinner rejects God and all His messengers, even to the Son of His love, 'The stone which the builders rejected.' In rejecting Christ, sinners bring about their own rejection, not because of God's purpose but in spite of it, and the stone that would have become the rock of their salvation becomes a stone of stumbling and destruction, 'And he that falleth on this stone (i.e., whoever, during probation, is offended at Christ) shall be broken to pieces; but on whomsoever it shall fall (i.e., at judgment, Christ shall become an avenger) it shall make and scatter them as dust or chaff.' Utter destruction is implied without any

possibility of restoration to either nation or individual.

For how can it be otherwise if a man will not let God save him? To refuse to receive Christ into our hearts and submit to Him in our lives is to expel Him from our vineyard which he has bought with His own blood—Let us beware lest we too become the crucifiers of Jesus, and that the law of God be executed *against* us instead of *for* us.

From the rejection of the Son, Christ proceeds to consider the rejection of the Gospel, in the parable of the Wedding Feast, Matt. XXII : 1-14. In the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen He deals with the Jews as a nation, the act was a joint conspiracy, but in the Wedding Feast, with them as individuals,

EACH ACTS FOR HIMSELF,

and each individual is judged by himself. The nation, as well as the individual, cuts itself off from the offered salvation of God. Two methods of self-destruction are shown : First, by refusing the invitation ; Second, by partially complying with the conditions of the invitation. The plan of salvation is that all are 'bidden'; and the purpose of the Gospel is that all shall be 'called'—vs. 3, 4. God's will is the salvation of the race by the salvation of each individual. If it can be said that God ever rejects any one, it is only after such an one has repeatedly rejected him. We reject God when we refuse His invitations.—(1) By deliberate act of the will, 'And they would not.' (2) By neglect and indifference, 'they made light of it, and went their ways.' (3) By violent opposition, 'the rest laid hold on his servants, and entreated them shamefully, and killed them.' They were rejected and destroyed because 'they were not worthy,' not because of

A DIVINE OUTBURST OF UNREASONING PASSION.

'But the king was wroth' represents the judicial anger of God against sin and sinners. The difference in treatment of

the rejecters indicates a gradation in the divine punishments. We also reject God when, although professedly accepting His invitation to final salvation, we refuse to abandon all sin, and become holy in heart and in life. Salvation consists not only in reconciliation with God—pardon, but renewal of the heart and life—holiness. Although 'the wedding was filled with guests' of 'both bad and good', yet only those are allowed to remain at the feast who are prepared for the company. The King inspected his guests before the feast began, and found the solitary man in the crowd who was not fitted for the occasion. 'He saw there a man which had not on the wedding garment,' but had come in his own clothes, thus insulting the king, who made a free provision of garments, and the guests who were properly attired. The reference is doubtless to the final judgment.

JUDGMENT STANDS AT THE THRESHOLD of the entrance 'to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' The wedding garment is, doubtless, 'the righteous acts of the saints' (Rev. XIX : 8, 9), which results from righteousness of the heart (Matt. V : 8 ; Heb. XII : 14). This guest represents a deliberate repudiation and rejection of God's plan and provision for salvation and a substitution of a man's own goodness. 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God'. He may enter the church, but will be stopped at the gate of heaven. In answer to the king's question, 'How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment ?' 'He was speechless', gagged or muzzled ; he had no self-defence. His old defence, that he was as good as many Christians, was gone, and he could give no reason why sentence should not be passed against him. His was the terrible silence of self-condemnation.

Let us give heed to the sentence. Notice that in every particular it is personal, both upon the part of God

and the sinner. The King came, saw and questioned his guest. The guest was personally convicted, and sentenced ; and the whole tenor of conviction and sentence turned upon

HIS INDIVIDUAL PERSONAL CHARACTER.

Although like those who refused the first invitation, he lacked that righteousness, which fits one to live in the kingdom of heaven, yet he presumed to accept the invitation and found, when too late, that mere acceptance does not secure the desired end. Like those who refused the invitation, he is rejected of God and destroyed. 'Bind him hand and foot', as a criminal, that he may not escape the purposed punishment. 'Cast him out into outer darkness'—The *out-door* darkness of the dark dungeon or mid-night street. He was 'not worthy', in spite of the excellence of his character, because he had refused God's grace.

Here the words of the king cease and Christ makes an application, as to the condition of the moral outcast who is cast from the glories of heaven into eternal darkness. He quoted that oft-repeated description, 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' (See on Matt. VIII : 12 & XIII : 32, pages 24—32). It is not for us to form even a conception of the misery here described. We cannot penetrate those depths of despair. 'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith'. Have ye on the wedding garment ?

Matt. XXIII constitutes Christ's closing public address, all future discourses were given privately to His own disciples. It contains His

LAST WARNINGS AND DENUNCIATIONS against the Scribes and Pharisees, whom he pronounces hypocrites, 'for they say and do not.' Seven or eight times in this one discourse He utters the solemn and terrible 'woe unto you,' *hypocrites*.

These denunciations were not against gross and scandalous sins, but against what Christ considered the sin of sins,

hypocrisy. He closed these indignant anathemas, against deceitfulness, with the still more terrible warning as to the consequences of such hollow profession. 'Ye serpents, ye offspring (generation) of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell?' He means, *how shall ye* with such characters as ye now have *escape the judgment* that consigns to Gehenna? How if you persist in your evil ways, can you escape the condemnatory penalty that finally sentences to the punishment and sufferings of hell? This question is an example of a method of making strong affirmations and is equivalent to 'Ye cannot with such a spirit as ye possess escape the final judgment that will condemn you to hell.' 'Wherefore ye witness to yourselves.'

Here again we must call attention to the fact that this awful denunciation was not an

ARBITRARY DIVINE FIAT,

but was a merciful warning of the natural, necessary, and inevitable consequence of their present course of living. In severe words, but with compassionate tones, Christ shows them what they are forcing God to do. In vs. 34—36, with tender sadness, He declares that notwithstanding coming persecutions, scourging, crucifixion and death, He will continue His favors as in the past, that they may have every opportunity to 'escape the condemnation of hell.' The true purpose of Christ in the stern language of that awful denunciation is manifested in the loving, melting words of v. 37. 'How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings.' These are the pitying, longing words of that love that never faileth. It is the deep wail of the wounded heart of God pouring itself forth through human flesh and speech.

'And ye would not.' The only reason why 'All these shall come upon this generation' and that they shall not escape 'the judgment of hell,' is that they des-

pised His love and refused Him as a Saviour. It is not because the love of God fails that men will be lost, but because they 'would not' heed, trust and love that love. They will have themselves to blame. Of which of us could Christ say to-day, it 'and ye would not.' Shall it become to any of us an eternal 'and ye would not?'

In Matt XXIV, XXV, Christ discourses on

THE LAST DAYS

enjoining the duty of watchfulness, in XXIV: 42—51, because of the coming judgment. He teaches the lesson of watchfulness by the illustration of 'the faithful and wise servant' whom He pronounces 'blessed' and 'set him over all that he hath'. Again he enforces the duty of watchfulness by an 'evil servant' who abuses and neglects his privilege, after the manner of all procrastinators. He acted on the time-enough-yet principle, saying 'in his heart, 'my lord tarrieth.' Notice, the inward motive for that servant's tyranny and prodigality was in 'My lord delayeth his coming.' He never purposed not being ready when his lord did come. So, with multitudes they expect to be prepared to die when death comes. 'The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not.' No time for preparation then, no opportunity for reformation. The coming is suddenly, unexpectedly and without warning, and to the unfaithful, self-indulgent, sensual servant is followed with terrible and final

CONDEMNATION AND PUNISHMENT.

'Shall cut him asunder (rather he shall be cut up by scourging; see margin of R. V.), and appoint his portion with the hypocrites.' He is separated from saints and allotted a place with hypocrites, which he really is at heart though professing to be a servant. He said 'My lord, but neither loved nor obeyed (Rev. XXI: 8, 27, XXII: 15,

Matt. VIII: 12, XIII: 43, 50, XXII: 13, XXV: 30. This picture shows us that unwatchfulness and unpreparedness lead to a hypocrite's hell.—See Matt. XXIII: 33. To denote the bitterest agony and convulsions of pain and rage, Christ repeats the phrase, 'there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.' He thereby expresses the condition 'with the hypocrites' as a living in suffering without hope of regaining the favor of God. Friend, which of these servants is a picture of you? 'Be ye also ready.' 'Watch therefore, for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh.' 'Take ye heed, watch, and pray; for ye know not when the time is.' 'What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.'

Chap. XXV is descriptive of the judgment, and by its two parables and one pictorial description makes life to be not so much a preparation for death as a

PREPARATION FOR FINAL JUDGMENT.

By the Ten Virgins, vs. 1-13, Christ represents professing Christians, in their individual spiritual condition. Here as everywhere He makes two classes, and only two. In this parable, He shows that one does not need to be a real hypocrite or yet openly wicked in order to be excluded from the kingdom of Heaven. The 'wise' represent those who possess an inward, abiding, growing faith and love that is being continually fed by the Holy Spirit. A religion sufficient for any emergency, that fails not under trial, temptation or sorrow, and that is always prepared and ready for the coming of the Bridegroom. The 'foolish' are not neglecters of religion, but such as are influenced by strong impulse, aroused emotion, or fear of sudden death, and who under such influences experience religion and begin a Christian life. Their religion is superficial and transient, and though keeping company with the 'wise' they do not grow in grace but become mere formalists. In the preceding parable, the wicked servant took advan-

tage of his lord's delay, not to make ready for his coming; but in this the foolish virgins, because they expected him at once, did not make provision for his coming of the bridegroom. How deceitful is the sinful heart, and how excuses can be made to justify carelessness in matters of religion.

'And at midnight * * * Behold the bridegroom cometh' at a time when least likely to be prepared, and when not watching in expectancy. 'They all arose and trimmed their lamps,' but

PROFESSION WITHOUT POSSESSION

is useless. 'While the foolish went away to buy oil, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast.' The foolish virgins now, become earnest in seeking the oil of the Holy Spirit, but it is a frightened earnestness, all in vain. Notice, 'they that were ready,' at the time of his coming, went in with the bridegroom, 'And the door was shut' to all others, 'as much for the security and joy, without interruption, of those within, as for the lasting exclusion of those without (Gen. VII: 16, Rev. III: 12).—Trench. 'Afterward came also the other virgins,' but without any evidence of having obtained oil. They hope to obtain admission without it, and cry 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' 'They came looking for mercy, when now it was time for judgment.'—Augustine. 'But he answered and said, Verily, (most emphatically) I say unto you, I know you not, (do not recognize you as bridesmaids).' To the unprepared, Christ will say would not know me by living faith, or recognize me by works of righteousness, hence I cannot now receive you. 'They are excluded by no external or arbitrary barrier, as the gates of heaven are represented as always open, but by their own nature and spirit. (See Rev. XXI: 25, 27).—Abbott. The door that shut in the prepared, also shut out the unprepared, forever



Ye cannot enter now! A parallel to this parable, is given in Luke XIII: 23-30, in which there is a contrast between real striving, and mere seeking, between entering in at the strait gate, and attempting to climb up some other way, and between striving to enter now, and waiting until 'When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut the door.' To the mere seeker, to the one who does not enter at the strait gate, and to the one who delays, 'He shall say, I tell you, I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and yourselves cast forth without.' The lesson for us each is "Watch therefore" in readiness—ready to die is ready to live. Beware lest the door is shut to us; lest we are cast out. Good desires do not save, there is no way but the one way, delayed repentance is no repentance. The all important question is not what we have been or are going to be, but what are we now? Are we "wise" or "foolish" virgins. There is nothing in this parable on which to build a hope of a future probation or of final restoration, it closes by a holding up of that repeated picture of suffering caused by the consciousness of the great and eternal loss of those who were so nigh as even to get a glimpse of the kingdom and yet

NOT PERMITTED TO ENTER.

Christ continues to set forth the manward and human-duty side of "Watch therefore" in the parable of the Talents, vs. 14-30. He has shown that to watch truly, our life must be morally and continually right, that our religion must be possessed of a spiritual reality. He next shows that we must be more than a mere personification of innocence. But that such life must evidence useful

ness and profitability toward God and man, we must be right toward God and man, not only in heart, but in life. He requires personal service from us such as servants. The one talented man was condemned as a "sloughful and wicked servant" because an "unprofitable servant." He was unprofitable because he absolutely made no attempt to improve or increase what was entrusted to him. Uselessness to man is wickedness in the sight of God. It is a selfishness that always leads to a self-destructive, dry-rot, see vs. 28-29. We are not only to watch and be ready but to be employed during the time of waiting using the least talent, i.e., gift or endowment. The same condemnation is visited on the unprofitable servant as on the guest without a wedding garment, on the hypocrites and on workers of iniquity. He is "cast out" from all further means of divine favor and from the life and glory of the divine presence. And he is not only cast out, but he is *talentless*—v. 28. "Take therefore the talent from him and give it unto him which hath ten talents", because he has forfeited it by not using it for me. The talent had been bestowed as a trust not as a gift; he was called to account for its use. *Nomuse* is a sin as well as *misuse*, neglect as truly as *disobedience*. His suffering was intensified not only by his loss of reward but by loss of his talent, and seeing another profit by his loss. The key of this parable is in the words,

"UNPROFITABLE SERVANT."

The lesson taught, is duty to God and obligation to man, that we are judged, not so much by the grace we receive, as by what we use. But loss is not the whole of this "sloughful" servant's doom. It is loss accompanied with pain and suffering. Once more Christ announces the eternal funeral knell. "And cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness; there shall be the weeping and

gnashing of teeth." Christ surely believed in future punishment, when His loving lips, over and over again, proclaimed the darkness, homelessness and suffering of a lost soul. Let us heed His words, and act on the injunction of Paul. 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee', 1 Tim. IV : 14. Christ's understanding of the duration of future punishment is shown in His pictorial description of the Last Judgment. No were else but in Matt. XXV : 31-46, have we Christ's description of this event.

It is the representation of a fact and sets forth a thought that He had so frequently enunciated that there are only two classes, and that these shall be finally infallibly and eternally separated. The separation is based on character—on classes, not on grades that merge into each other. All are either white or black, none are grey or brown. "And he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats, and he shall put the sheep on his right hand, (the place of honor,) but the goats on his left." vs 32, 33.

First the righteous are adjudged and awarded, and then the wicked are sentenced, who are condemned for

THE GOOD THEY DID NOT DO

rather than for the evil they did do. Read the sentence in v. 41. "Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, (or depart from me under a curse,) into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." The dread moment, for the severance of the connection between God and those He had sought to win, has come. He is no longer God as Father to them. Observe, while the righteous (v. 34) are blessed of the Father, the unrighteous are not cursed of God, they are under a self-induced curse, cursed as a consequence of their own sins. The righteous had a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, but the unrighteous or disinherited children pass into the fire pre-

pared, not for them, but for the devil and his angels; they had become partners with them in their sins, and were therefore sharers with them in their guilt, and must consequently become sharers of their punishment. God provided a redeemer, not a hell, for man; God's purpose was a Heaven for all, He made no other arrangements for mankind. Men go to hell because they make themselves unfit for Heaven. Men are lost because God cannot help Himself.

That there should be an eternal punishment for

THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS

none deny. Why then should there be objection to men who ally themselves with devils receiving like penalty and joining them in their habitation? "And angels which kept not their first estate, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgement of the great day."—Jude, 6.

II Peter II : 4—"For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell (Tartarus) and committed them to pits (chains) of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

In each case, the punishment of the fallen angels is used as a precedent or example, to prove or illustrate the certainty of punishment upon evil doers and neglecters of salvation. From Christ's words we have seen that the punishment of these is to be the same as that of the fallen angels. The character of hell's inhabitants is ascertained from Rev. XXII : 8—"But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."

And from XXII : 15—"Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers and the idolaters (covetousness is idolatry) and every one that loveth and maketh a lie."

The final sentence of the judgment is

in v. 46 "And these shall go into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." The tribunal, the inquiry, the decisions and the awards are judicial. Judicial awards always remain in force until they are judicially reversed or repealed. There is

NO APPEAL FROM THIS TRIBUNAL

to a higher court, or a second trial; the sentence pronounced is irrevocable. The awards of the judgment, "Come ye blessed" and "depart from me, ye cursed," are as opposite as are the characters addressed, and from v. 46 we must conclude that both are never-ending. We cannot here go into any verbal criticism, only to remark that the very same Greek work is used in both clauses of the sentence, therefore the punishment threatened must be as lasting as the life promised. Plainly, the duration of that punishment, the nature of which Christ has so frequently portrayed, is everlasting. "Punishment" certainly means positive misery, not "annihilation" or "restoration" and if it ever end then "the eternal life" of the "righteous" may also end. The contrast is endless and boundless misery with endless and boundless life. No one thinks of disputing eternal life. No logic can get rid of a like period of eternal death. Everlastingness is fixed, by an irrevocable sentence to each. There is no way of escape from the terrible force of these terrible words of Jesus. Infinite, perfect and infallible love spoke these words of warning to us poor sinners. Shall we heed them?

Christ who was wonderfully apt in the choice of figures has set before us the penal sufferings of the lost under various aspects, all of which convey the idea of intolerable internal and external punishment. The most suitable word which He can choose to describe the period of this awful suffering are "everlasting" "eternal fire" "eternal punishment". What does it mean? It means 'eternity.' How long will it last? It will last as long as eternity endures. How long is that? Forever!

Have you reached well that word "Eternity?" Have you ever attempted to comprehend the extent of its vast duration:—

"ETERNITY."

(Isaiah 57:15.)

"Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"—Isaiah 33:14.

"Infinite years in torment shall I spend,
And never, NEVER, NEVER, find the end?
Ah! must I dwell in torturing despair
As many years as atoms in the air?
When these are spent, as many thousands more
As grains of sand as crowd the ebbing shore;
When these are gone, as many to ensue
As stems of grass, on hills and dales that grew;
When these are done, as many left behind
As leaves of forest, shaken with the wind;
When these are past, as many on the march
As starry lamps that gild yon spangled arch;
When these are over, as many millions more
As moments in the millions passed before;
When all these doleful years are spent in pain
And multiplied by myriads yet again
Till numbers drown the thought, could I suppose

That then my wretched years were at a close,
This would afford some ease; but, ah! I shiver
To think upon the dreadful word — FOREVER,
The burning gulf, where I blaspheming lie,
Is Time no more,
But vast ETERNITY."

"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"—Mark 8:36.



ERRATA:

- Page 1, 1st column, 4th line.—Insert *not* after "denotes."
- Page 2, 2nd column.—Change "were" to *was*, to read "was manifested" and "could be effected," in same sentence, to "would be effected." Omit comma after "reward."
- Page 3, 1st column, 2nd line.—Change "or" to *for*. In 7th line, omit comma after "as well as." 2nd column, insert *from* after "distinct" in the 5th line. Change "V" to *I*, to read "I: 26." Place the comma after "physical" after "with," to read "connected with, and."
- Page 4, 1st column, 12th line.—Change "is" to *are*, to read "are observed". 2nd column, 6th line, omit comma after "provided."
- Page 5, 1st column.—Omit comma after "terms" and "found" to read "terms used" and "found in," also omit "to" before "each" in 30th line, to read "and each"; and hyphen after "be." in 2nd column.
- Page 6, 1st column.—Change the period after "fire" to a comma. 1st line 2nd column.—Change "neither" "nor" to *either or*. change "effect" in 2nd column to *effect*.
- Page 9, 2nd column.—Omit comma after "resurrected" and after, "condemned."
- Page 10, 1st column.—Omit comma after "transition:" in 2nd column change "shall" to *will* in the 26th line.
- Page 12, 2nd column.—Change "never" to *ever*, to read "can ever be paid."
- Page 13, 2nd column.—Change "was" to *is*, to read "is impossible."
- Page 15, 1st column.—Change "basil" to *basal*. Place the comma that is after "Hades" after "Gehenna." In 2nd column, omit "in" after "that" in next to last line, to read "that the examples." "judge" in the 15th line should be *Judge*.
- Page 16, 1st column.—Change "scribes" in the 15th line to *Scribes*.
- Page 18, 1st column.—Omit comma after "terms," "heaven" and "effort" and in 2nd column, after "exhortation" and "salvation." Omit comma after "imagery."
- Page 21, 2nd column.—Change "but" to *it is*, to read "it is rather the."
- Page 24, 1st column, 9th line.—Change "is" to *are*, and "shall" in the 29th line to *will*, and "accompanies" in the last line to *accompany*.
- Page 25, 1st column.—Change "is" in 36th line to *be*; 2nd column. The comma after "in him" should be placed after "men, to read "men, in him." Omit the period after "disown" in 2nd column.
- Page 26, 1st column.—Omit comma after "in Christ." Change "emphasised" to *emphasized*. The comma after "woe unto thee" should be a note of exclamation and "because they repented not" placed in quotation. In 2nd column, 36th line, omit "s" before "that." Place comma before, instead of after, "which," to read "fire, which all." Change "fiery" in the 7th line from the bottom to *fiery*.
- Page 29, 2nd column.—Change "idicators" to "indicators."
- Page 32, 2nd column.—Change "their" in 19th line to *there*.
- Page 34, 1st column.—Change "realise," "symbolise" and "loose," to *realize, symbolize and lose*, and "shall" in the 21st line to *will*. In 2nd column change the period after 2 Cor. V:10 and Luke XV:2 to a comma and "But" to *but*.
- Page 35, 1st column.—Insert a semi-colon after "sold out" and insert *could* after "family," to read "family could be sold." In 2nd column, change comma after "jubilee" to period and "to" to "To."
- Page 36, 2nd column.—Change "truely" to "truly."

- Page 37, 2nd column.—Change "harmonious" to *harmonious*. In line 16 from bottom change "does" to *do* and in 14 change "cheat" to *they*.
- Page 38, 1st column.—"runs" in line 15 to *run*, in line 17 insert *His forgiveness* after "and" to read "His forgiveness is."
- Page 43, 1st column.—Change "are" to *at* in line 7.
- Page 46, 1st column.—Change "escape" to "escape." 2nd column, 7th line, omit "it" after "to-day," to read "say, to-day and ye would not."
- Page 49, 2nd column.—Change "were" to *where*, to read "No where else," and "judgement" to *judgment*.
- Page 50, 1st column.—Change "repealed" in line 7 to *repealed*, and "word" in line 8 from bottom to *words*.

The sermons first appeared as newspaper reports and the proof reader and compositors seem not to have exercised needful care in correction. I have called attention to the more important errors and hope the readers will be careful to note them. My desire has been to secure a truthful and helpful interpretation of God's Word upon this awful subject, and hope that in substance of thought and argument I have in a measure succeeded.

A. M. PHILLIPS.

N. B.—May be had by addressing Rev. A. M. Phillips, 11 Avenue Place, Toronto, at 10 cents each or \$1.00 per dozen. Also a sermon by Mr Phillips, on "Future Probation," at 5 cents each, three for 10 cents or twelve for 25 cents. Both are for sale at the Methodist Book Room.